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Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 29 June 2015 from the Chair of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 15 December 2014 from the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General in which they, following consultations with Member States undertaken by their respective offices, jointly proposed terms of reference for the 2015 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (A/69/674-S/2014/911).

As you are aware, the comprehensive review consists of two stages. In the first, the Secretary-General designated an advisory group of seven experts to prepare a review report. In the second, an intergovernmental process will examine that report and take pertinent actions. On 22 January 2015, the Secretary-General appointed the following members of the Advisory Group: Anis Bajwa (Pakistan), Saraswathi Menon (India), Funmi Olonisakin (Nigeria), Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah (Mauritania), Charles Petrie (France), Gert Rosenthal (Guatemala) and Edith Grace Ssempala (Uganda).

As Chair of the Advisory Group, and on behalf of all its members, I am pleased to inform you that we have concluded our work within the stipulated time frame and in strict compliance with the terms of reference. The Group engaged in wide consultations and discussions, analysed abundant background documents and conducted five case studies — Burundi, the Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Timor-Leste — to motivate its recommendations.

While the report was being prepared, two other bodies were exploring related, critical dimensions of the peace and security pillar of the United Nations: the

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High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations established by the Secretary-General on 31 October 2014 and the High-level Advisory Group for the Global Study on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) established through resolution 2122 (2013) of the Security Council. Consultations were held between all three bodies in pursuit of coherence and complementarity, without prejudice to the independent nature of those exercises.

It has been an honour to work with such distinguished colleagues in preparing the report. I should also like to acknowledge the excellent support that we received from our designated secretariat and many partners around the world. As you now move forward with the second stage of the review, we sincerely hope that our report will result in specific decisions on the part of the principal organs of the United Nations to help the Organization to better fulfil one of the highest tasks given to it by the Charter of the United Nations: sustaining peace in the world.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and the report as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 13 and 115, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gert **Rosenthal**
Chair of the Advisory Group of Experts
on the Review of the
Peacebuilding Architecture

Challenge of sustaining peace

Report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture

Summary

The report was prepared at the request of the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council by a seven-member advisory group of experts designated by the Secretary-General. It represents the first stage of a two-stage review of the role and positioning of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office, in addition to the operational entities of the United Nations active in peacebuilding. It is intended to nourish the second, intergovernmental stage, which it is hoped will lead to specific action to strengthen the Organization's approach to sustaining peace.

In the view of the Advisory Group, the Organization's peacebuilding architecture cannot be understood as limited to the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office. Rather, the shortcomings in efforts to fill the gaping hole in the Organization's institutional machinery for building peace are systemic in nature. They result from a generalized misunderstanding of the nature of peacebuilding and, even more, from the fragmentation of the United Nations into separate silos.

On the first point, for many States Members of the United Nations and United Nations entities alike, peacebuilding is left as an afterthought: underprioritized, underresourced and undertaken only after the guns fall silent. Sustaining peace, however, is among the core tasks established for the Organization by the vision set out in the Charter of the United Nations of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. It must be the principle that flows through all the Organization's engagements, informing all its activities — before, during and after violent conflicts — rather than being marginalized.

On the second point, several principal intergovernmental organs, and especially the Security Council, hold pieces of the peacebuilding puzzle, each from the vantage point of its particular responsibilities under the Charter. The fragmentation between them is reproduced throughout the United Nations: within the Secretariat, between the Secretariat and the rest of the Organization, and in operations on the ground where peacebuilding actually takes place. This problem has long been recognized, but periodic attempts to tackle it have been frustrated. The human and financial costs of lapse and relapse into conflict have become intolerable and call for urgent resolution.

In section I of the report, the concept of "sustaining peace" is introduced. In section II, the Advisory Group outlines, in broad strokes, the changing global context for conflict and peacebuilding. After two decades of steady decline, major civil conflicts are once more on the rise. Worse, those conflicts have become more complex, increasingly fragmented and intractable. The drivers of violence — some radically new, some long-standing — raise serious implications for United Nations, international and regional efforts to support national processes to move beyond conflict. A broader, comprehensive approach of sustaining peace is called for, all along the arc leading from conflict prevention (on which, in particular, the United

Nations system needs to place much greater emphasis), through peacemaking and peacekeeping, and on to post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. The success of such an approach critically relies on uniting the peace and security, human rights and development pillars of the Organization.

A second critical determinant of success is fostering inclusive national ownership. In the aftermath of violence, neither a cohesive nation State nor an inclusive system of governance can be taken as a given. The national responsibility to drive efforts to sustain peace must therefore be broadly shared across all key social strata and divides. A wide spectrum of political opinions and national actors, in particular women and young people, must be heard.

Success also depends on establishing and adhering to realistic timelines for United Nations peace operations and other peacebuilding engagements — and even more so for development assistance. Sustaining peace after conflict is a particularly lengthy and costly challenge. Evidence strongly suggests that undue haste and a narrow focus on cessation of hostilities rather than addressing root causes are significant factors in relapse.

In section III of the report, the Advisory Group presents an assessment not only of what the Organization has done well, but, more importantly, what it has done poorly. A major conclusion, expressed quite candidly, is that, by allowing the Organization's overall fragmentation to continue, Member States are themselves part of the problem. The flipside is that they can and must be part of the solution. Simply put, they must accept the need for the various parts of the United Nations to work together on peacebuilding and find ways to assist them to do so. Without a successful formula through which to unite the common efforts of the three pillars, United Nations efforts to sustain peace will continue to fail.

In section IV, the Advisory Group presents specific proposals to build coherence in delivering sustainable peace, which are described below.

Promoting coherence at the intergovernmental level

The Peacebuilding Commission should become the advisory bridge between the relevant intergovernmental organs that it was always intended to be. Its main functions would continue to be engaging in advocacy, providing assistance in marshalling resources, providing assistance in improving coordination within and outside the Organization, engaging in strategic thinking and formulating policy recommendations and offering a meeting place for interested parties. The Commission should, however, undertake more of its work through its full membership, become much more flexible and transparent in its working practices and place greater emphasis on advising and advocating. Through its full membership, it should also be accountable to the relevant principal intergovernmental organs and realize the bridging between them in that way.

The success of the above will particularly depend on a deepened commitment from the main intergovernmental peacebuilding actor, the Security Council, which should regularly request and draw upon the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission on the peacebuilding dimensions of mandates, with the Commission in turn supported by a strengthened and upgraded Peacebuilding Support Office working closely with relevant United Nations entities. The Council should also consider passing to the Commission's responsibility continued accompaniment of countries on the Council's agenda where and when peace consolidation has sufficiently progressed.

Improving the peacebuilding capability of the United Nations system

A range of measures is vital to improving delivery on the ground. The United Nations system needs to pay more attention to the timing and management of transitions between various forms of United Nations engagement: between different kinds of mission and from United Nations country teams to missions and back. Enhancing the authority and capacity of United Nations leaders on the ground in conflict-prone and conflict-affected countries, ensuring that there is continuity in leadership across different engagements and providing United Nations leaders with the resources necessary to carry out their mandates are all critical to serving people in need and enhancing the Organization's credibility.

Lastly, sustaining peace — which, fundamentally, concerns reconciliation and building a common vision of a society — must be understood as a task that only national stakeholders can undertake. The United Nations and international actors can accompany and facilitate the process, but not lead it.

Partnering to sustain peace

The scale of the challenge of sustaining peace means that the United Nations cannot succeed alone. Closer strategic and operational partnerships with the international financial institutions and with regional and subregional organizations are critical. The United Nations must accord priority to developing and deepening both.

Ensuring more predictable peacebuilding financing

A decade of focus notwithstanding, financing for efforts to sustain peace remains scarce, inconsistent and unpredictable. Here also, strategic partnerships and pooling of funding between the United Nations, the World Bank and other bilateral and multilateral financial institutions will maximize impact and share risk.

The Peacebuilding Fund should play to its comparative advantage as a rapid, impactful, procedurally light and risk-taking investor of first resort in efforts to sustain peace. Providing the Fund annually with a symbolic 1 per cent of the value of the total United Nations budget for peace operations as core funding from assessed contributions would help to close the gap between mandates and programme resources. Providing assessed contributions for the programmatic dimensions of peace operation mandates would also assist in that regard.

Improving leadership and broadening inclusion

Building national leadership is an integral part of a reconciliation and nation-building agenda. The United Nations must focus particular support thereon. It should also accord priority support to broadening inclusion so that peacebuilding processes are nationally owned in the fullest sense. Efforts must particularly accelerate to attain and then surpass the target set by the Secretary-General of allocating 15 per cent of United Nations-managed funds to post-conflict peacebuilding projects that advance gender equality, empower women and address women's specific needs in peacebuilding contexts.

If all those measures are implemented together, they will represent a fundamental redefinition of and reorientation in the Organization's work: one through which the challenge of sustaining peace is genuinely seen as central to the vision set out in the Charter of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

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I. Introduction

1. If there is a principal raison d'être for the creation of the United Nations, it is to sustain international peace in all its dimensions. That is the noble goal encapsulated in the determination set down in the Charter of the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom. The goal of sustaining peace is woven throughout inter-State and intra-State conflict prevention. Where violent conflicts break out, it implies taking rapid and resolute action to seek to end them. Above all, the root causes of violent conflict must be addressed.

2. As the present report was being finalized, the United Nations was preparing the post-2015 development agenda. Proposed sustainable development goal 16 calls for the promotion and maintenance of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, which can provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. That all-encompassing formulation presumes societies liberated from violent conflict, with the capacity to manage the drivers of violence. It is fully compatible with the Charter: indeed, it represents an important effort to continue and sharpen the vision of the Charter.

3. The Organization's approach to the challenge of sustaining peace has evolved over time. The notion of peacebuilding first came into its own in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace", issued in 1992 (A/47/277-S/24111). The concept returned to the spotlight in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. In December 2005, the recommendations contained therein were adopted simultaneously by the Security Council (resolution 1645 (2005)) and the General Assembly (resolution 60/180), creating three entities based in New York: the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office. They were intended to fill what was, according to the then Secretary-General, a "gaping hole" in the Organization's institutional and structural capacity to support countries in transition from violent conflict to sustainable peace (see A/59/2005, para. 114).

4. At the time, the development was hailed as an important landmark. In 2010, however, a first five-year review of the new entities' work found that the hopes that had accompanied the founding resolutions had yet to be realized and presented detailed recommendations on how the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office might be improved (see A/64/868-S/2010/393). The hope was expressed that the review would serve as a wake-up call, helping to strengthen the collective resolve to deal with peacebuilding in a more comprehensive and determined way.

5. Five years further on, in 2015, those hopes have, if anything, further waned.[1] Over time, it has become increasingly clear that what is needed is a fresh look, not only at the specialized architecture itself, but also at the entire approach to peacebuilding taken by the United Nations at large. The promise held out by the new entities notwithstanding, it is an overarching finding of the Advisory Group

[1] In a survey published by the Future United Nations Development System project, only 20 per cent of respondents believed that the Peacebuilding Commission was performing effectively and only 52 per cent that the United Nations was performing well in peacebuilding and development (www.futureun.org/en/Publications-Surveys/Article?newsid=63).

that the key task under the Charter, that of sustaining peace, remains critically underrecognized, underprioritized and underresourced globally and within the United Nations system.

6. If the central goal of sustaining peace is to be attained, it needs to be understood as a key shared responsibility throughout the entire Organization: a thread that must run strongly through all the Organization's work in prevention, peacemaking, peace enforcement and peacekeeping, as well as through post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. Improving the Organization's performance in sustaining peace is truly a systemic challenge, one that goes far beyond the limited scope of the entities created in 2005 that have been labelled the "peacebuilding architecture". It requires the engagement of all three principal intergovernmental organs, in addition to the Secretariat, the Organization's programmes and specialized agencies, and, of course, United Nations operations on the ground.

7. This holistic vision of sustaining peace has profound structural, policy, administrative and budgetary implications, which constitute the main unifying threads of the report:

(a) Sustaining peace should be understood as encompassing not only efforts to prevent relapse into conflict, but also efforts to prevent lapse into conflict in the first place;

(b) When considering the peace and security activities of the United Nations, strong emphasis must be placed on conflict prevention;

(c) Sustaining peace requires a fully integrated approach at the strategic and policymaking level as well as at the operational level;

(d) At the policymaking level, the principal intergovernmental organs of the United Nations must be understood as having a role to play in sustaining peace, each within its respective purview;

(e) The same holistic and integrated approach is required on the part of the United Nations at the administrative and operational level, both at Headquarters and on the ground where peacebuilding actually takes place;

(f) Preventing lapse or relapse into conflict is considerably less expensive, in both human and financial terms, than responding to crises;

(g) Conversely, the current failure to accord priority and resources to efforts towards sustaining peace is condemning the world and its peoples to tragic, violent cycles of relapse, as the case studies for the review eloquently demonstrate;

(h) While capacity-building, State-building, institution-building and development all demand considerable technical expertise, first and foremost peacebuilding must be understood as an inherently political process;

(i) Numerous and varied stakeholders — public and private, national, regional and international — share the responsibility for peacebuilding. The multidimensional nature of sustaining peace is unavoidable and poses major challenges to achieving coherence;

(j) Conflict and peace have an impact on every single person in a society. Reaching reconciliation and sustainable peace requires broad and inclusive

participation, involving State and civil society stakeholders all the way to the grass-roots level;

(k) Addressing the root causes of conflict requires long-term commitments and long-term access to regular, predictable and adequate financing.

8. The assessments and recommendations made herein have been shaped by the five case studies undertaken (Burundi, Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Timor-Leste). The studies were not designed as in-depth analyses, but as efforts to glean some key lessons that appeared to hold general relevance for sustaining peace. Many of the main points detailed herein draw directly from the case studies and the most pertinent are illustrated in short boxes scattered throughout the text.

9. The report is divided into four parts:

(a) The present introduction;

(b) In the second part, the Advisory Group draws, in broad lines, elements of the changing global context that fundamentally affect how the United Nations undertakes peacebuilding. It is intended as a backdrop against which to assess the Organization's performance and to highlight the main debates about sustaining peace;

(c) The third part contains an assessment of United Nations peacebuilding activities, as called for in the terms of reference proposed by the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council;

(d) In the final part, the Advisory Group advances conclusions and recommendations, drawing on the findings presented herein.

II. Evolving global context for peacebuilding

A. Contemporary conflict: continuity and change

10. The two-and-a-half decades since the end of the cold war have seen both continuity and change in the global dynamics of conflict as long-standing drivers of violence have been overlaid with new and emergent drivers. Some ideologies have crumbled; others have been radically energized. New global Powers have emerged, as have new authoritarianisms and new extremist movements. The exponential growth of social media has helped to both drive and resist those emergences. Conflicts have become more complex and the elements defining them more fragmented.

11. After declining for much of the late 1990s and early 2000s, major civil wars almost tripled from 4 in 2007 to 11 in 2014.[2] Various factors are rendering conflicts more intractable, including the growth in violent extremism, links to illicit markets and organized crime and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Some two thirds of United Nations peacekeepers today and almost 90 per cent of

[2] Representing a mix both of new conflicts and of previously low-intensity violence that has dramatically "scaled up" to "civil war" (see Sebastian von Einsiedel, "Major recent trends in violent conflict", Occasional Paper (Tokyo, United Nations University, Centre for Policy Research, 2014)).

personnel in special political missions are working in and on countries experiencing high-intensity conflict.[3]

12. National drivers of conflict play a significant role in animating today's conflicts. Weak leadership and governance too frequently lead to fragile institutions, inept public management and corruption, compounded by the muzzling of political dissent and the media and the politicizing of the State's security organs. Not content to see their authority come to an end, some national leaders — including in several countries in which the United Nations has recently been engaged — have abetted the promulgation of self-serving legislation or controversial constitutional amendments that benefit them or their parties. Violently disputed political or electoral processes have often followed.

13. The politics of exclusion provide a related set of conflict drivers. One or another set of ethnic, religious or tribal interests dominates power to the exclusion of others. Minorities are oppressed, scapegoated or violently targeted and the animus against them is politically exploited by elites to maintain their hold over populations.

14. The changing face of global conflict has had a particular and dramatic impact on women. Gender inequalities are deepened and exacerbated by violence. Half the world's 59.5 million forcibly displaced (19.5 million refugees, 1.8 million asylum seekers and 38.2 million internally displaced persons) are women.[4] Sexual violence is used as a tactic to displace populations, while the ideological opposition of many extremist groups to girls entering public spaces, including educational institutions, is placing them more generally at a heightened risk (see S/2015/203). The world is witnessing sexual and gender-based violence not only as a war strategy but also as a central tactic of terror. Women and adolescent girls in conflict-affected countries face a heightened risk of falling victim to sex and labour trafficking and account for most victims of human trafficking overall (see S/2014/693). Set against this, the vital role of women as actors in peacebuilding processes is, at least, beginning to gain international recognition and support, as discussed later herein.

15. The economic and environmental sectors also provide drivers of violence. The absence of livelihoods and socioeconomic deprivation, in particular when coupled with a sense of historic marginalization, fuel grievances. When managed well, natural resources can be a source of progress, wealth and stability for a nation. When mismanaged or misappropriated, they can have severely negative economic, social and environmental effects and constitute a massive loss for peacebuilding and development. It has been suggested in a prominent United Nations study that since 1990 there have been at least 18 violent conflicts strongly fuelled by natural resource exploitation and that conflicts relating to natural resources experience an earlier and higher probability of relapse than others.[5]

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[3] Rahul Chandran, "The changing terrain for peacebuilding" (Tokyo, United Nations University, Centre for Policy Research, 2015); and von Einsiedel, "Major recent trends in violent conflict".

[4] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "UNHCR global trends: forced displacement in 2014" (Geneva, 2015), available from www.unhcr.org/556725e69.html. The Women's Refugee Commission estimates that 80 per cent of the world's 51 million people displaced by conflict are women, children and youth (see https://womensrefugeecommission.org/resources/document/883-women-s-refugee-commission-fact-sheet?catid=234).

[5] Silja Halle, ed., *From Conflict to Peacebuilding: The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment* (Nairobi, United Nations Environment Programme, 2009).

16. Land and water, in particular, can be structural drivers of conflict. Conflict-affected and post-conflict States are often characterized by weaknesses in land administration and records and recurring tension between customary rights and formal legal systems,[6] with the latter sometimes instrumentally used to displace or dispossess populations.[7] Many recent peace agreements have touched on the need to guarantee land rights and introduce effective land registration, but, often, little has been achieved.[8] Deteriorations in the quantity and quality of water, owing to climate change, pollution, privatization and inequities in supply, have also proved to be conflict drivers at both the local and regional levels. Many transboundary water basins are located in regions with a history of inter-State tension, creating the threat that water may become a significant causal factor in future regional conflicts.[9]

17. Population growth and environmental degradation are adding new complexities to the global security milieu. The links between declining natural resources per capita (principally land and water), population migration and the emergence of violent conflict are complex.[10] The Security Council has called for a better understanding of the links between climate and fragility, but limited guidance exists on how to apply a "conflict sensitivity" lens to climate change adaptation policies or projects.[11]

18. Contemporary conflicts show a strong tendency to spill across borders, giving a transnational dimension to what may have begun as a local dispute. Regionalization of conflicts sees States intervening militarily across boundaries, directly or through proxies, and exacerbating local drivers of conflict. People fleeing insecurity and deprivation (which often go hand in hand) further internationalize the impact of conflict. In 2013, more than one quarter of intra-State conflicts involved external actors supporting one or another warring party.[12]

19. Local, national and international criminal networks further drive violence. They hollow out State structures, leaving them dramatically weakened even after conflict.[13] Involvement in criminal economies lowers the barriers to entry for rebel

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[6] J. Unruh and R. C. Williams, "Lessons learned in land tenure and natural resource management in post-conflict societies", in *Land and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding*, J. Unruh and R. C. Williams, eds. (London, Earthscan, 2013).

[7] United Nations Human Settlements Programme and United Nations Integrated Framework Team for Preventive Action, "Toolkit and guidance for preventing and managing land and natural resources conflict: land and conflict" (2012).

[8] Department of Political Affairs and United Nations Environment Programme, *Natural Resources and Conflict: A Guide for Mediation Practitioners* (2015).

[9] See, for example, United Nations Environment Programme, *Vital Water Graphics: An Overview of the State of the World's Fresh and Marine Waters*, 2nd ed. (Nairobi, 2008). Available from www.unep.org/dewa/vitalwater/index.html.

[10] See, for example, Henrik Urdal, "Demographic aspects of climate change, environmental degradation and armed conflict", paper prepared for the Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development, New York, 21-23 January 2008 (UN/POP/EGM-URB/2008/18).

[11] Lukas Rüttinger and others, *A New Climate for Peace: Taking Action on Climate and Fragility Risks* (2015). Available from www.newclimateforpeace.org/.

[12] See Simon Fraser University, Canada, Human Security Report Project, *Human Security Report 2013: The Decline in Global Violence — Evidence, Explanation, and Contestation* (Vancouver, Human Security Press, 2014); see also D. Cunningham, "Blocking resolution: how external States can prolong civil wars", *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 47, No. 2 (2010).

[13] World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development* (Washington, D.C., 2011).

movements, reduces their incentives to enter into peace processes or agreements and decreases their leaders' ability to ensure the compliance of their forces when they do.[14] Extremist ideologies are also increasingly causing the dynamics of numerous violent conflicts to mutate. Amid neglect on the part of Governments, disaffected populations, especially young people, can be attracted by visions of worldwide struggle.

20. In several contexts, even the notion and function of the nation State are put into question: consider the recent experiences, each with its singular characteristics, of Somalia, Libya, the Central African Republic and Iraq (South Sudan shares some similar features). In such cases, the collapse or absence of a dominant central authority led to the State's fracturing, often along ethnic or sectarian lines, and to the emergence — through great violence or even mass atrocities — of ethnically or religiously more uniform regions.

21. The fracturing and loss of credibility of central authority in such contexts are increasingly leading to a profound dilemma. Independent, sovereign nation States are the building blocks of the international order and of the United Nations in particular. Member States are therefore naturally inclined towards a predominant international paradigm of recreating a strong central authority. In a context of fragmentation, however, it is possible that an attempt to rebuild or extend a central authority could lead not to peace, but to deepening conflict. In such cases, there is a need to find new approaches that understand peacebuilding, at least in its early phases, as having more to do with strengthening local domains of governance than with endeavouring to re-establish a strong central authority.

B. Evolutions in understanding the peacebuilding challenge

22. All those complex dimensions of contemporary conflict — some radically new, some long-standing — have serious implications for efforts by the United Nations and other international and regional actors to support national processes to resolve violent disputes. From the perspective of sustaining peace, the old model of ending a conflict through a comprehensive peace accord between erstwhile fairly well-identified enemies has often had to give way to less tidy arrangements with less clearly defined protagonists. This, in turn, greatly increases the risk of relapse.

23. In the report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277-S/24111), peacebuilding was presented as the logical follow-on to peacemaking and peacekeeping: the main objective was to prevent relapse into conflict once a peace agreement had been secured. It was also implicitly asserted that countries emerging from armed conflict should be treated as belonging to a distinct category requiring special attention.

24. Some 20 years later, there remain compelling reasons to consider countries already affected by or recovering from conflict as meriting particular attention. Conflict-affected countries, for example, have lagged considerably behind other countries in attaining the Millennium Development Goals.[15] To give just one tragic

[14] Von Einsiedel, "Major recent trends in violent conflict".

[15] See Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *States of Fragility 2015: Meeting Post-2015 Ambitions* (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2015).

illustration, the 10 worst-performing countries for maternal mortality globally are all conflict-affected or post-conflict States.[16]

25. Although the sequential idea of peacebuilding continues to prevail, an all-encompassing concept was suggested as early as 1995 in the position paper of the Secretary-General entitled "Supplement to An Agenda for Peace" (A/50/60-S/1995/1). More importantly, in February 2001 the Security Council recognized that peacebuilding was aimed at preventing the outbreak, the recurrence or the continuation of armed conflict and therefore encompassed a wide range of political, development, humanitarian and human rights programmes and mechanisms, noting that that required short- and long-term actions tailored to address the particular needs of societies sliding into conflict or emerging from it (see S/PRST/2001/5).

26. It is that broader approach that the Advisory Group embraces herein. "Peacebuilding" — the term proposed herein is "sustaining peace" — needs to be liberated from the strict limitation to post-conflict contexts. Many of the priorities and the tools for preventing lapse or relapse into conflict are similar and it makes little sense to divide limited energies and resources artificially. It is a paradox that the Security Council, which in 2001 itself proposed an all-encompassing approach, continues to call its agenda item on the matter "post-conflict peacebuilding".

27. Ideas about the proper institutional focus for peacebuilding have also evolved over time. Prolonged violent conflict creates trauma and deepens social cleavages, but also gravely damages institutions. Without strong institutions, a society lacks the channels that can peacefully manage the tensions that naturally arise and that can swiftly turn — or return — to violence. Historically, therefore, efforts to engender a broad enabling environment for reconciliation have been accompanied by a focus on rebuilding and reinforcing the resilience of key institutions.[17]

28. There continues to be debate about exactly which institutions and sectors should receive priority attention, but the past few years have seen some emergent consensus. The conflict-affected and post-conflict countries that have come together to form the "Group of Seven Plus" initiative, for example, have advocated five key sectors of priority peacebuilding intervention: legitimate politics, security, justice, economic foundations, and revenues and services. There is a significant convergence between that analysis and that of the World Bank in its *World Development Report 2011* (and the country-level surveys underlying it).

29. The case studies for the present report reflect the successes and failures associated with such institution-building. The relapse in the Central African Republic hinged considerably on the failure to institutionalize dialogue and to advance security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. By contrast, in Timor-Leste, and to a certain extent Burundi, resilient institutions have been built up. The deep political crisis that enveloped it while the present report was being prepared notwithstanding, Burundi has to date managed to avoid

[16] See Save the Children, *State of the World's Mothers 2014: Saving Mothers and Children in Humanitarian Crises* (Westport, Connecticut, 2014).

[17] According to the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, "peacebuilding is a term of more recent origin that, as used in the present report, defines activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war ... effective peacebuilding is, in effect, a hybrid of political and development activities targeted at the sources of conflict" (A/55/305-S/2000/809, paras. 13 and 44).

returning to the abyss of mass inter-ethnic violence. In part, this must be attributed to the comparative resilience of its institutions established under the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi.

C. Peacebuilding templates and timelines

30. A related area of evolution in thinking about peacebuilding concerns time horizons: specifically, that successful peacebuilding requires much longer than had previously been appreciated. The change of attitude needed to move from confrontation to a degree of tolerance and acceptance of the other is slow in coming. In addition, as a new wave of comparative research has demonstrated, creating legitimate institutions that can help to prevent relapse takes a generation. Even the fastest-transforming countries in the past century took between 15 and 30 years to raise their institutional performance from the level that prevails in many of today's fragile States.[13] All this takes place in a context in which progress, inevitably, is neither linear nor monodirectional.

31. Current United Nations mission timelines do not, however, appear to take account of this, nor do the bulk of the world's development assistance programmes. In both kinds of intervention, current horizons of expectation remain completely unrealistic. Indeed, over the past couple of decades, a rough template appears to have emerged for the international response to post-conflict challenges. First, mediators achieve a peace agreement that is usually fragile and not always sufficiently reflective of the local dimensions of the conflict. It is followed by a limited transition period, often accompanied by temporary power-sharing arrangements and/or some form of national dialogue process. Within a year or so, a new constitution is drafted and adopted. The culmination is the holding of new and democratic elections — usually a massive logistical exercise.

32. That sequence obviously has as its intention the suturing of social wounds and the careful installation of new national authorities with a democratic mandate to act as primary interlocutor with international partners for subsequent peacebuilding. All too frequently, however, the model breaks down.

33. The causes are legion, but evidence suggests that a common factor across all the phases is undue haste, based on impracticable timelines. Peace agreements are often hurried and the processes frequently influenced or driven by outside mediation groups with varying levels of international legitimacy. National consultation exercises are organized with great expense and energy, but many end up predominantly recycling the views of the same narrow political class that jockeyed for power during the violence. Seldom is sufficient time and space afforded to organizing dialogue at the grass-roots level, on the ground, in the provinces, with broad inclusion. While new constitutions endeavour to embed hard-won compromises from peace agreements in the national politico-juridical fabric, when this is rushed, they may do so imperfectly or in ways that insufficiently transform the grievances that led to conflict in the first place. Amid all the haste, efforts to relaunch basic services or create new livelihoods for affected populations rarely receive the attention that they merit.

34. It is, however, post-conflict elections that so often pose the most risk of relapse.[18] Seen as a means to turn the page on violence, they too often become, instead, a moment at which violence tends to re-emerge. The campaign becomes an opportunity for tactics of exclusion (who can run, who can vote and who cannot do either). Contentious election campaigns turn violent or reopen divisive wounds. Electoral commissions are often perceived as partisan, favouring incumbents. While the transition period sees fragile and cautious power-sharing and accommodation, the post-electoral dispensation is often characterized by a winner-takes-all mentality and fundamentally threatens previous advances. Too frequently, elections are followed by a premature rejection of international accompaniment by the new authorities in the name of sovereignty and independence.

35. Democratically held elections remain a laudable goal, but the process leading to them must be carefully and judiciously prepared and be able to rely on the credibility and support of the population through extended dialogue and outreach. For their part, national dialogue processes should be preceded and paralleled by strenuous efforts to consult local communities on specific issues, framing the discussions at the national level.

D. Links between peace, development and human rights in peacebuilding

36. Progress in development is critical to preventing both lapse and relapse into conflict. Research is compelling that the failure to develop economically poses a risk of lapse into conflict in the first place.[19] As stated earlier, economic and social grievances are often among the root causes of conflict, especially with rising expectations fostered through mass access to social media and the inability of Governments to meet those expectations.

37. If conflict has ensued, there is abundant evidence that the risks of relapse are significantly mitigated when economies are reactivated. Indeed, as one leading researcher puts it, "economic development may be the true 'exit strategy' for international peacekeeping".[20] Overcoming economic and social grievances, offering populations the means to earn livelihoods and creating the foundations for inclusive, broad-based economic growth are integral to any transition from conflict to normalcy.

38. That said, there is, as yet, no clear consensus on how to proceed. Current efforts to promote post-conflict economic recovery are relatively timid and appear to cluster around a three-track approach:[21] immediate stopgaps (such as emergency employment programmes), early recovery (broadly aimed at recovery of income-

[18] See, for example, Dawn Brancati and Jack L. Snyder, "Time to kill: the impact of election timing on post-conflict stability", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 57, No. 5 (2013); and Marco Pfister and Jan Rosset, *What Makes for Peaceful Post-Conflict Elections?*, Swisspeace Working Paper 2/2013 (Bern, 2013).

[19] Paul Collier and others, *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy* (Washington, D.C., World Bank; New York, Oxford University Press, 2003).

[20] Paul Collier, "The political economy of fragile States and implications for European development policy", paper prepared for the Conference on "The challenges of fragility to development policy", Barcelona, Spain, May 2009.

[21] Nadia F. Piffaretti, "Economic recovery and peacebuilding", paper for the 2015 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (March 2015).

generating capacity) and longer-term economic recovery (such as economy-wide reforms for enabling growth). There is, however, little clarity in either research or practice on re-energizing economies. The usual phase of brisk post-conflict economic rebound proves difficult to sustain. Among the early casualties of conflict is confidence in the institutions likely to prove critical to longer-term recovery. Priority must be accorded to finding ways of re-establishing their credibility.

39. Human rights violations and impunity are also root causes and must be addressed as early as possible. This raises difficult dilemmas, however. While the gravity of many conflicts calls for some form of transitional justice, the timing of such processes can be polarizing and appear inimical to establishing enduring non-violent relations. Equally, if unaddressed, impunity risks diminishing trust in and support for the peace process. Institutional and apolitical approaches to transitional justice are sometimes criticized as foreign, against a spirit of local ownership. Conversely, home-grown approaches are sometimes criticized for not meeting emergent international norms. Timor-Leste was castigated by the United Nations and the international community for rejecting an international tribunal, instead setting up a truth and friendship commission with Indonesia. Nevertheless, that approach turned out to have contributed significantly to building early peace.

40. From the Organization's perspective, the triangular relationship between peace, development and human rights demands that the Organization's three pillars work closely together. That, however, continues to prove enormously challenging, a painful reflection of the fragmentation of the United Nations, born of the distribution of responsibilities contemplated in the Charter between the Security Council and the General Assembly, with the Economic and Social Council occupying an intermediate and somewhat ambiguous space in-between.[22] The defence and protection of human rights find some space in the work of the Security Council, but are addressed more systematically in the Human Rights Council, a subsidiary body of the Assembly.

E. Broad and inclusive participation

41. It has become commonplace to insist that the success of peacebuilding fundamentally depends on national ownership (see, for example, A/67/499-S/2012/746). It is generally taken to mean that peace cannot be imposed from the outside, but must be genuinely and gradually built by a process of accommodation on the part of national stakeholders, public and private, who are best placed to understand the local dynamics that condition the attainment of peacebuilding goals.

42. Clearly, peace needs to emerge organically from within society, addressing the multiple concerns and aspirations of various sectors and seeking common ground so that all sectors feel invested in strategies, policies and mechanisms that offer the way forward. All too frequently, however, national ownership is defined too narrowly and unthinkingly. It should never be allowed to become a rationalization for international indifference or inaction. Just as importantly, in the aftermath of violence, neither a cohesive nation State nor an inclusive or effective system of governance should be taken as a given. Inasmuch as peace cannot be imposed from

[22] Some parts of the Charter clearly recognize the Economic and Social Council as a principal organ, while others appear to imply that it is subsidiary to the General Assembly and the Security Council.

the outside, it also cannot simply be imposed by national elites or authoritarian Governments on fractious populations that lack even minimal trust in their leaders or one another. Too often, national ownership is equated with acquiescing to the strategies and priorities of the national Government. In divided post-conflict societies, such an approach risks perpetuating exclusion.

43. There are no easy solutions to the conundrum, given that the United Nations is made up of Governments representing Member States, collectively the ultimate arbitrators of the Organization. Nevertheless, failure to respond to people's aspirations or to ensure at least a minimum platform of good governance and trust in their Governments can compromise the very concept of making peace sustainable.

44. The Advisory Group therefore argues in favour of inclusive national ownership in peacebuilding, whereby the national responsibility to drive and direct efforts is broadly shared by the national Government across all key social strata and divides, across a spectrum of political opinions and national actors, including minorities. This implies participation by community groups, women's platforms and representatives, young people, labour organizations, political parties, the private sector and national civil society, including underrepresented groups.

45. The United Nations and other international actors can play an important role of facilitation and accompaniment (or, paraphrasing a respected non-governmental organization, Interpeace, the United Nations should "do less and enable more"). At the operational level, that means supporting processes that help Governments to broaden ownership to as wide an array of national stakeholders as possible, so that the latter can engage with those Governments and participate to the fullest extent in all stages of peacebuilding, from the inception of policies to actions and projects, priority-setting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of results.

46. Civil society has a critical role to play, but in societies emerging from conflict is rarely well organized in its capacity to articulate demands. Indeed, it too may be divided, diverse and fragile. It is likely to be dominated by elites, either from within diasporas or from within the country, who are generally more fluent in the discourse of international development and diplomacy. It is vitally important, therefore, that diverse voices find a vehicle of expression through organizations at all levels of conflict-affected societies.

47. There is a particular challenge in ensuring that the voices of the most conflict-affected communities are heard. They are usually the most vulnerable of all. The harsh realities that they face to survive make it more difficult for them to remain independent and unaffected by the violent currents of polarization that will have swept their society — but they must be engaged.

48. Young people affected by conflict also deserve special attention. In the past two decades, the populations in conflict-affected countries grew almost twice as swiftly as in developing countries not affected by conflict. As at 2015, half of the population in conflict-affected countries is estimated to be below 20 years of age.[23]

[23] With average annual growth rates between 1995 and 2015 of 2.5 per cent versus 1.3 per cent, respectively. Population figures from *World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision* (ST/ESA/SER.A/336); country classification according to the World Economic Situation and Prospects list (www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/); and data for conflict-affected countries from the Peacebuilding Support Office list based on countries with peacekeeping operations/special political missions and/or States that are eligible for funding from the

Without educational opportunities and with high youth unemployment, young people can be drawn into anti-social and sometimes violent activities. Too frequently, however, young people are depicted as only a challenge — or, worse, as a threat — to sustaining peace. National and international actors alike must recognize the potential of young people as agents of positive change. To achieve this, educational systems must be rebuilt and young people involved and given a voice in rebuilding their societies. Microenterprise and small enterprise generation can make a positive impact in creating work opportunities,[24] especially for young people, as can jump-starting the agricultural sector.

49. The rapid rise of new forms of information and communications technology has implications for conflict and peace that are only beginning to be grappled with and that offer possibilities to broaden inclusion around peacebuilding. With more than 200 million blogs, 120 million YouTube videos and 500 million Facebook users worldwide,[25] social networking represents a seismic shift in human interaction. The new social media can be harnessed to draw people together, to foster inter-group dialogue, to promote conflict management and resolution and to create public will to change attitudes and behaviour. Social media can support political reform and broaden participatory governance: in both the recent and 2011 elections in Nigeria, to choose just one example, social media were extensively used to flag any electoral irregularities.[26] As recent events in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq have demonstrated, social media can also be used to foment conflict and spread hatred and division. All too swiftly, social media can become easy vectors for mobilizing recruits to armed groups or for funding and publicizing their violent acts.

50. Conventional media have become essential tools in peacebuilding programming. Community radio, for example, has played a key role in peace consolidation in Sierra Leone over the past decade. Attention needs to turn to the transformative promise of the new forms of technology, however. Traditional media approaches saw populations as passive receivers of carefully crafted messages, whereas users of new media tend to resist being lectured to. Communication for sustaining peace must become interactive, offering new horizons for broadening inclusion and national ownership.

F. Women's participation in sustaining peace

51. Women constitute a vitally important dimension of broadening inclusion for sustaining peace. Prompted by the grass-roots leadership of women organizing for peace around the globe, the adoption of landmark Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security has begun to ensure that, alongside a necessary focus on women and girls as victims of global conflict, has come an

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Peacebuilding Fund.

[24] See World Bank, *IFC Jobs Study: Assessing Private Sector Contributions to Job Creation and Poverty Reduction* (Washington, D.C., 2013).

[25] Sheldon Himelfarb, "Media, technology and peacebuilding". Available from www.buildingpeace.org/think-global-conflict/issues/media-technology-and-peacebuilding.

[26] See André-Michel Essoungou, "Social media boosts Nigeria's polls: elections redefined, as candidates and voters go online", *Africa Renewal*, vol. 25, Nos. 2-3 (August 2011), available from www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/august-2011/africa-wired; and Jennifer Ehidiamen, "Leveraging technology in the Nigerian elections", *Harvard Africa Policy Journal*, 13 May 2015, available from http://apj.fas.harvard.edu/leveraging-technology-in-the-nigerian-elections/.

important emphasis on them as vital, active agents in peacemaking and peacebuilding. As will be discussed later, however, there is much more to do to ensure that United Nations peacebuilding approaches are broadened in that critical dimension.

52. Unfortunately, as already noted, overlapping forms of discrimination and exclusion particularly affect women during violent conflicts, placing serious obstacles in the way of ensuring full participation. Given social norms in many conflict-affected societies, sexual violence against women and girls inflicts trauma well beyond the act of violence. Public spaces, such as markets, or activities, such as fetching water and firewood, become dangerous for women — but so too can their homes be dangerous. Conflict increases the burden of unpaid care work of women in countries that have no social infrastructure and limited access to social services.

53. Many current violent extremist movements brutalize women and girls and make frontal attacks on women's rights. Paradoxically, however, they are also increasingly targeting women in their recruitment strategies. Women have become combatants in several recent conflicts, and their post-conflict treatment must be carefully considered. Empowering women and all groups of civil society concerned and promoting social inclusion and cohesion can be the best strategy for countering violent extremist narratives and acts.

54. Reconciliation efforts do not always take into account the long-term trauma of both women and men, the young in particular. In many cases, domestic violence has also increased, reflecting a social propensity for violence and a failure to heal trauma. Access to justice for women, especially those from excluded communities, is always a problem and traditional justice can reinforce patriarchal norms and strengthen discrimination.

55. Reflecting the needs of women in peacebuilding has other specific dimensions. Gender-sensitive security sector reform is critical to enabling women to re-enter public spaces safely. Economic recovery strategies need to take into account both paid and unpaid work by women. Priority needs to be accorded to restoring social infrastructure and to establishing basic social services, lest women continue to bear an excessive burden of care in a situation in which conflict will have increased the number of dependants and persons with disabilities. Combating impunity for violence against women in conflict (and indeed beyond) must be a high priority in justice during and after conflict.

56. Ensuring the full participation of women in peacebuilding processes is a question of rights, but is not limited to that. It is, at last, becoming widely recognized that the participation of women is also crucial to the success of economic recovery, political legitimacy and social cohesion (see A/65/354-S/2010/466). Consequently, without the engagement of women from the earlier moments of attempting to end the violence to the latter stages of consolidating the peace, the dangers of relapse are greatly heightened.

III. Assessment of United Nations peacebuilding activities

A. General comments

57. In the preceding section, the Advisory Group presented a complex and changing environment for the Organization's efforts to sustain peace. The dynamics of conflict mix new and long-standing factors. Consequently, conflicts are becoming more complex and intractable and peacebuilding processes more prone to failure (around half of the conflict-specific items currently on the agenda of the Security Council can be considered to be cases of relapse after previous rounds of conflict).[27] Predominant peacebuilding paradigms have begun to evolve, but remain insufficiently holistic, preventive, sustained and resourced. They do not yet match the vision of sustaining peace as the unbroken thread that must wind through all the Organization's actions.

58. By definition, the United Nations is an external actor, which, in the best of circumstances, is accepted by some national players as an impartial, honest broker and a helpful source of political, technical and financial accompaniment. The United Nations and other international stakeholders should therefore show appropriate sensitivity towards the peoples and culture of each specific situation. Building peace can take place only on the ground and can ultimately be driven only by national stakeholders. The specific analysis of the situation, the motivations and aspirations that drive the players, the changing contextual circumstances and the dynamics of engagement between the players require intimate knowledge and understanding that only an effective United Nations presence on the ground can hope to capture (and, even then, only partially).

59. Given the overarching vision of the shared responsibility to sustain peace argued for herein, it immediately follows that, within the United Nations, responsibility cannot be considered to be limited to the three new entities created in 2005 (the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office). Furthermore, it cannot be stressed enough that those entities are based in New York and designed to fulfil a critical but delimited purpose in supporting United Nations efforts. Vital peacebuilding mandates and activities are entrusted to peacekeeping operations and special political missions and to the Headquarters departments that support them. Moreover, resident coordinators and United Nations country teams in both mission and non-mission settings are increasingly called upon to play central roles in sustaining peace. All those constitute crucial elements in the Organization's peacebuilding architecture.

60. The entire range of United Nations actors — from peacemakers to peacekeepers to the specialized agencies — must therefore recognize and embrace their centrality to sustaining peace and act together accordingly. That is not always the case now.

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[27] An approximate estimate of conflict contexts that constituted items on the agenda of the Security Council (as at May 2015) indicates that slightly more than half may reasonably be considered cases of relapse.

B. Fragmentation of the United Nations and its impact on peacebuilding

61. One of the Advisory Group's most important conclusions is that, notwithstanding numerous major efforts at reform and enhanced coordination, such as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the establishment of the Integration Steering Group and the "Delivering as one" initiative, the deep fragmentation of the United Nations system persists. It is palpable in the distribution of responsibilities between the Organization's main intergovernmental organs. It is felt again in the distribution of responsibilities between the departments into which the Secretariat is divided, between the Secretariat and the agencies, funds and programmes and between Headquarters and the operational level.

62. A crucial part of the challenge is found in the differing perceptions of which situations meet the criterion of threats to international peace and security. Most members of the General Assembly perceive an encroachment by the Security Council on topics normally beyond its remit when it explores the security dimensions of development and environmental issues. Meanwhile, the Council (or at least some of its members) views with unease what it perceives as attempts by the Assembly to encroach on matters relating to the maintenance of international peace through the so-called "back door" of peacebuilding. Nevertheless, bringing such issues together is precisely what sustaining peace demands.

63. The silos established by the Charter in dividing responsibilities between the principal intergovernmental organs are directly and unhelpfully mirrored in the distribution of responsibilities between United Nations entities. They communicate with one another in various ways and at various levels, but there is general recognition that deep fragmentation persists, given that each entity focuses on its own specific mandate at the expense of overall coherence, added to the absence of a more forceful culture of coordination from the top. A particular additional layer of fragmentation is added between the Secretariat and the agencies, funds and programmes, with structural disincentives to and even prohibitions against mixing or pooling their respective funding streams.

64. The divisions are, of course, reflected in the field. Some tangible progress under the "Delivering as one" banner notwithstanding, the case studies herein suggest that much remains to be done to prevent the fragmentation at Headquarters from being reproduced in the field. The mindset of United Nations leaders and staff on the ground too frequently still reproduces the same tectonic divide seen at the level of the intergovernmental organs and at the level of the United Nations system globally.

65. The challenge of sustaining peace sits precisely across all those fault lines. Without a successful formula through which to unite the efforts of the three pillars, United Nations peacebuilding will continue to fail. The consequences — all too visible in several case studies — are relapse into violent conflict, repeated redeployment of crisis response and massive human and financial costs. The overall interest of the United Nations and its Member States would surely be better served if it were generally accepted that, at least in the area of sustaining peace, the relevant principal United Nations intergovernmental bodies can and must collaborate, each within its specific purview and without transgressing its rules of

procedures and working methods, and that that should be mirrored in close operational cooperation in the field. Only in one of the five case study countries was there clear evidence that that had been successfully and consistently achieved: that of Sierra Leone (and, to a lesser degree, Burundi).

66. The Advisory Group strongly holds that, in the area of sustainable peace, the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council must be partners, each within the particular purview conferred upon it by the Charter. In promoting and cementing that partnership, the Peacebuilding Commission has a unique role to play in its advisory capacity to all three of the intergovernmental organs in question through its specific mandate to provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations in addressing peacebuilding.

67. Unfortunately, the Security Council is not always understood as a key peacebuilding actor. A close examination of its resolutions over the past decade reveals, in fact, that it has very frequently mandated complex and multidimensional peace operations in "peacebuilding mode" in a considerable number of countries. It is also clear that the Council is becoming increasingly overburdened.[28] Some Council members will admit that the heavy workload may be leading to moments where the needed attention to what may be termed "less burning" contexts of peacebuilding is crowded out by the imperative to focus on proliferating crises. Ideally, mandate formulation should be informed from the beginning by a strategic vision of a desirable end state for the affected country. Formulating such a vision, however, requires adequate time for deliberation and, because it entails bringing together the political, security, human rights and development perspectives, the capacity to consult and distil the views of a diverse array of actors beyond the conventional peace and security realm. That is now rarely the case at the Organization's intergovernmental level, highlighting an opportunity to assist that the Peacebuilding Commission may be well placed to take.

Sierra Leone: integrating peace and development for peacebuilding

Sierra Leone has made significant progress in its transition from an extraordinarily violent internal conflict to a peace that shows increasing promise of sustainability. National leadership and civil society, in particular women's organizations, played a critical role in building peace, as did progress in the truth and reconciliation process (although the unconditional amnesties offered were intensely criticized in some quarters). Throughout, there was notable engagement between the United Nations and national stakeholders. In the initial phases, the Organization's focus was on peacekeeping, with a deliberate shift to peacebuilding in 2008. Progress across the three pillars of the United

[28] By way of illustration, the Council held 193 meetings, adopted 47 resolutions and issued 22 presidential statements in 2013. In 2014, it held 263 meetings, adopted 63 resolutions and issued 28 presidential statements — representing an increase of 30 to 40 per cent in overall workload in just one year (see the highlights of Security Council practice for 2013 and 2014, respectively, at www.un.org/en/sc/documents/highlights.shtml). 2014 represented the Council's most heavily charged year since 2006, while, as at the time of writing, 2015 was on course to be almost as heavily charged.

Nations — peace and security, human rights and development — was by no means evenly spread, however.

Key institutions of democratic governance and reconciliation, such as Parliament, the National Electoral Commission, the Human Rights Commission, the Anti-Corruption Commission and the security sector, were, on the whole, strengthened. Challenges remain even in those areas, however, including a lack of transparency, corruption and a weak civil service. More critically, progress in the economic, judicial and social spheres has not met the aspirations of the people. High economic growth has not yet translated into better livelihoods, reduced poverty or sufficient delivery of basic social services such as education and health, partly because insufficient attention has been paid to illicit financial flows, including those from the trafficking of drugs or illicit exploitation of natural resources. The fragility of the public health system was tragically underscored by the Ebola crisis that struck in 2014. Meanwhile, some of the economic and social root causes of the conflict, such as high levels of youth unemployment and pervasive poverty, have yet to be addressed.

Both the progress and the challenges may be related in part to the nature of United Nations engagement with Sierra Leone over time, which had some unique characteristics reflected in the findings of the Advisory Group. By its resolution 1829 (2008), the Security Council essentially converted the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone, a peace operation, into the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone. Two salient features stand out: a strong (and unusual) collaboration between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission; and the Organization's ability to deliver as one United Nations on the ground, in coordination with other stakeholders. Among the notable features of the resolution are the following:

(a) The functions of the mission combined classical peacebuilding activities (such as consolidating good governance reforms and strengthening the rule of law) with a strong political mandate;

(b) The primary responsibility of the Government for peacebuilding, security and long-term development was reaffirmed;

(c) An explicit call was made for closely coordinating with and supporting the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as the implementation of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework and projects supported through the Peacebuilding Fund;

(d) An executive representative of the Secretary-General was deployed, serving also as the resident coordinator and resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme, facilitating seamless United Nations action on the ground;

(e) The importance of a fully integrated office, carrying out effective coordination of strategy and programmes throughout the entire United Nations family, was underlined, with a call made for appropriate expertise and adequate material resources so that the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone could implement its mandate effectively and efficiently;

(f) Closer partnerships were sought with regional organizations, including the Economic Community of West African States and the Mano River Union.

With that resolution, the Security Council therefore moved in the direction proposed herein through the guidance that it offered to both the national authorities and the United Nations. On the other hand, neither the Economic and Social Council nor the General Assembly was involved in the endeavour. Mandates from those key bodies dealing with the development pillar of the United Nations could have strengthened early attention to development as part of peacebuilding on the ground.

The remaining challenges urgently require the United Nations to galvanize all partners to support Sierra Leone in tackling governance and development deficits in order to sustain peace.

C. Ensuring consistency of delivery throughout United Nations action on the ground

68. The intergovernmental fragmentation outlined above is mirrored in United Nations action on the ground, leading to what may be termed "an inverted U" in which there is little effective United Nations attention to prevention, great attention to crisis response (although still frequently less than is needed) and again relatively little attention in the recovery and reconstruction phase.

69. In earlier years, again reflecting the fragmentation of mandates and approaches, the Organization's development agencies and in particular the United Nations country teams tended to pay insufficient attention to conflict prevention. In recognition of that state of affairs, in 2004 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat launched a joint programme on building national capacities for conflict prevention. The programme has contributed positively to bringing together development and political action in favour of peacebuilding (in both preventive and post-conflict mode), but its expansion remains limited by funding uncertainties. The recent Human Rights Up Front initiative of the Secretary-General, meanwhile, provides for regional quarterly reviews of countries and has significant potential to involve the broader United Nations system in a collective review with preventive dimensions.

70. In too many cases, however, preventive efforts come too late and do not succeed, with the United Nations forced to consider other, more active, political options. Here, fragmentation is also palpable. In some situations, in particular in Africa, a Security Council resolution results in the deployment of a special political mission or a peacekeeping operation headed by a special representative of the Secretary-General

reporting directly to the Secretary-General. In many others, however (perhaps even the majority), a United Nations country team headed by a resident coordinator is expected to sustain the engagement amid crisis, perhaps with some additional political engagement by a roving United Nations or regional organization envoy. The objective difference between the crisis in one kind of setting and another is not always immediately clear. The distinction in response, however, has considerable implications for attention and resources, with a mission setting usually guaranteed a much higher level of support from the Secretariat's political arm.

71. A resident coordinator is accredited to the country directly by the Secretary-General and reports to the Secretary-General through the Administrator of UNDP, who chairs the United Nations Development Group. While the "first among equals" status of the resident coordinator within the United Nations country team may have worked suitably in what may be termed "normal" development settings (and even that is questionable), it raises questions in conflict-affected and post-conflict peacebuilding settings. In complex settings, the relationship between the resident coordinator and the heads of agencies must be formalized through a second reporting line to the resident coordinator and the United Nations presence on the ground must be supported by a special Secretariat framework bringing together relevant units (such as the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Department of Safety and Security and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) that is tailored to the country context.

72. As a particular option in complex situations, the seldom-used model of a clearly time-bound executive representative of the Secretary-General — combining the roles of special representative of the Secretary-General with that of resident coordinator and resident representative of UNDP — could be revived. The model proved effective in two of the case study countries for the review (Burundi and Sierra Leone) in enhancing integration around the delivery of peacebuilding goals during the mission phase.

73. When peace operations are deployed with ambitious, multidimensional mandates from the Security Council, it is not widely realized that they come without the guarantee of financing to drive their programmatic peacebuilding implications. The United Nations is regularly mandated, for example, to provide support in critical sectors such as security sector reform or rule of law. Even if mission budgets appear, from the outside, to be considerable, a closer examination reveals that, somewhat astonishingly, they come without any of the resources necessary for programming in those core mandate areas. Instead, programme resources depend on the unpredictable generosity of donors. The case studies for the review reveal the enormous gap between the expectations established by such mandates and the paucity of resources — political, technical and financial — made available. The incentives for a broader collection of peacebuilding actors to align themselves usually being absent, in a very real sense in many contexts, peacebuilding inadvertently appears set up to fail. A solution must be found to ensure predictable funding for critical programme efforts towards sustaining peace.

74. The resident coordinator and the United Nations country team continue to function throughout the tenure of a mission and a special representative of the Secretary-General, but the embedding of the country team within the mission is usually tenuous, which has longer-term consequences for the transition from

Security Council-mandated peace operation back to country team management alone once the situation sufficiently stabilizes. The case studies for the review illustrate that more consideration needs to be given to how the country team should operate and be funded for sustaining peace before, during and after a mission.

75. In situations in which the conflict is concentrated in a few areas of the country, the United Nations often is unable to continue, or does not even consider continuing, development activities in the remaining relatively peaceful areas, notwithstanding the positive impact that such an option would have, not only for its intrinsic value, but also as an incentive for warring parties to seek a similar peace dividend. Again, the case studies of both South Sudan and the Central African Republic represent instances of the phenomenon.

76. In another variant of fragmentation, the case studies highlight the perils of an overly abrupt transition between United Nations operational configurations. Once a peace operation is drawn down again, there is a visibly diminished investment in the Organization's peacebuilding efforts from the political side of the Secretariat. Only recently has the job profile begun to factor in the need for resident coordinators to be able to play a strategic political role when called upon in a peacebuilding setting. Meanwhile, United Nations country teams, for their part, are not regularly provided with the resources to pay adequate attention to the political and strategic dimensions of peacebuilding. In parallel to the post-crisis diminishing of political attention is the rapid drop-off in financing — again, an aspect of the silo effect in which various forms of engagement enjoy radically different modes of funding (a point that will be taken up below).

Central African Republic: cost of inconsistent international attention

The Central African Republic represents a dramatic and instructive case of peacebuilding failure. It resulted, to a significant degree, from the abrupt and premature transition out of peacekeeping in 2000, the subsequent dramatic shortfall in attention that followed and persisted and the particular failure of international partners to mobilize resources on anything like the scale necessary and of the national counterpart to live up to its obligations.

The Central African Republic remains a State that needs to be constructed. From its emergence, there has been an almost total absence of central authority outside the capital, Bangui. Colonial and post-colonial leaders were seen largely to share an exclusively extractive interest in the territory. The country is endowed with enormously fertile soil and regular rains and with very extensive mineral deposits, including diamonds, gold and petroleum. The successive ruling elites and their entourage never demonstrated any sense of responsibility or accountability towards the populations whom they were meant to administer. Poor leadership and governance and the neglect of the regions must therefore be seen as the principal causes of the current conflict. While ethnicity became a field of leverage in the 1980s, religion became one only very recently, during the crisis of 2013-2014, and both were violently instrumentalized.

Almost since the beginning of the violence (in 1996), the United Nations has deployed a varying sequence of peace operations, beginning with a peacekeeping operation, the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic, in 1998. The types of intervention authorized by the Security Council, however, appear to have been guided by broader budgetary concerns rather than by the needs of the situation in the country. For example, while in July 1999 the Secretary-General was warning of a sudden upsurge in violence, the impact of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the precarious security situation, the Council opted to withdraw the mission, even though the national authorities formally requested that it should be retained. The decision appears to have been driven more by a desire to reduce the global peacekeeping budget than by a sober analysis of what was needed on the ground. The subsequent 15 years of intervention could be characterized as a succession of United Nations peacebuilding mandates and small offices seeking desperately to catch up with an inexorably deteriorating political and security situation. During that period, there was also a particularly graphic illustration of the divergence between mandates and means: successive Council resolutions charged United Nations peacebuilding offices to play a role in security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, but sufficient voluntary contributions never materialized to enable that.

Even after the Central African Republic barely survived its greatest crisis yet — all but tipping into all-out genocide between 2013 and 2014 — there still appears to be little appetite to provide the kind of risk-taking donor support that meaningful peacebuilding will require. There even appears to be an assumption in some donor quarters that the establishment of a new and multidimensional peacekeeping operation, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, constitutes in itself the provision of adequate assistance and that somehow peacebuilding will automatically follow from that.

Meanwhile, in terms of its most recent mandate, the need for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic to extend central authority is complicated by the fact that such authority has never existed in many areas of the country, and the legitimacy of the central authority is even contested in some. Compounding the problems of the United Nations is its inability to attract qualified staff to a hardship duty station, together with the constraints imposed on direct engagement with local communities by the Organization's post-conflict security regime in the country.

D. United Nations and participation of women in peacebuilding

77. As already noted, in the 15 years since the Security Council adopted its landmark resolution 1325 (2000), there has been a paradigm shift from seeing women only as victims of violent conflict to recognizing their vital role as agents of change, including, especially, in the area of peacebuilding. Most countries have

developed national action plans under the resolution, with Governments and members of civil society working together, identifying specific strategies, putting in place independent monitoring mechanisms and, in many cases, allocating a dedicated budget.

78. All those factors, however, have yet to translate into sufficient material changes in women's lives, or even in the Organization's peacemaking and peacebuilding processes. Research has shown that peace accords that meaningfully include civil society, including women, are at least 50 per cent more likely to endure than when they do not.[29] Nevertheless, peace processes do not consistently maximize the ways in which the voices of women's organizations and civil society can be heard, although the United Nations has begun to make modest progress in appointing women mediators, ensuring that women are part of mediation support teams, encouraging the presence of women in the negotiating delegations of parties to conflicts and ensuring the participation of women in peace processes overall.[30] As examples ranging from Colombia and the Philippines (where recent peace talks have seen balanced gender representation on negotiating teams) to the Organization's support on Yemen (where, before the current crisis, the National Dialogue process strictly observed quotas to ensure women's representation at all levels) have shown, it is both feasible and fruitful to engage women meaningfully in efforts to make and consolidate peace.

79. The Organization's efforts towards sustaining peace must, however, offer an opportunity to expand the political participation and leadership of women beyond the peace table. The support offered to reforming public administration and governance structures should take into account the need to respond to the aspirations of women and to engage them as active participants. Electoral reforms can introduce temporary special measures that build the capacity of women as citizens and leaders and quotas to increase their representation in elected bodies at all levels. Research has shown that the introduction of such measures for the first election after a conflict results in increases in the numbers of women elected in subsequent elections.[31] The Organization's engagement around the world has shown the benefits of advocacy in that direction.

80. More generally, however, the same issue of United Nations fragmentation is sadly visible when it comes to the Organization's women and peacebuilding efforts. The case studies for the review tended to reveal a weakness in bringing together the peace and security dimensions and the socioeconomic dimensions of the participation of women. Mission components tended to concentrate on narrow but important questions of political participation and the prevention of conflict-associated sexual and gender-based violence, while the United Nations country

[29] Desirée Nilsson, "Anchoring the peace: civil society actors in peace accords and durable peace", *International Interactions: Empirical and Theoretical Research in International Relations*, vol. 38, No. 2 (2012).

[30] According to an internal assessment and discussion paper prepared in March 2015 by the Department of Political Affairs, women were included in all 12 United Nations (co-led) mediation support teams in 2014 and women's participation in the delegations of negotiating parties showed a steady upward trend with senior women represented on 17 delegations participating in 10 processes compared with 4 delegations in 14 processes in 2011.

[31] Rachel Dore-Weeks, "Post-conflict countries, women's political participation and quotas: a research brief", background paper; see also www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures.

teams worked on gender-sensitive approaches to economic recovery and inclusion without always bringing a peacebuilding lens fully to bear. Again, separate funding silos and institutional imperatives reinforced those tendencies. Better coherence and integration between missions and country teams in the delivery of gender-oriented United Nations peacebuilding must urgently be built.

81. Reflecting the importance of all those dimensions, in 2009 the Secretary-General adopted a funding goal (under his seven-point action plan on gender-responsive peacebuilding of 2010) for financing allocated to peacebuilding approaches targeting gender equality. The goal was to ensure that at least 15 per cent of United Nations peacebuilding expenditure would be allocated to activities addressing women's specific needs, advancing gender equality or empowering women as their principal objectives. In 2011, to boost efforts to meet the target, the Peacebuilding Fund launched a first gender promotion initiative, calling for targeted projects on women's empowerment and gender equality.[32] A second such initiative is being implemented.

82. Nevertheless, in no single country of engagement has the United Nations attained its own modest 15 per cent target, still less exceeded it. Peacebuilding Fund project allocations directly targeting gender equality and empowerment (known as "gender marker 3") stood at only 9.3 per cent of total allocations in 2014. Fund allocations to projects that broadly "mainstream" gender (known as "gender marker 2") have risen more: from 10 per cent in 2008 to 81.3 per cent in 2014 (the World Bank's broadly similar target of 60 per cent of all International Development Association lending operations and 55 per cent of all Bank lending operations being gender-informed was met in 2014).[33] However, the slowness of United Nations entities on the ground in coming forward with genuinely peacebuilding-oriented gender-related programming proposals, rather than thinly repackaged existing initiatives (a phenomenon that affects more than just the issue of gender) has limited both progress and impact. Worse, United Nations entities have made only limited progress in tracking resource allocation for gender-focused interventions: just one quarter currently have systems to track resources for gender equality and women's empowerment. A major additional push is clearly needed in order to meet and then surpass the goals of the Secretary-General in that critical area.

E. United Nations credibility and leadership

83. The repeated failure to sustain peace has heavy consequences in human lives and global expenditure. Viewed from the ground, it is also damaging the Organization's credibility. There are several dimensions to the issue. One relates to an expectations gap in many conflict-affected countries, where the host State and society find limitations in United Nations mandates or budget lines hard to understand. Local communities are puzzled, for example, as to why United Nations blue helmets cannot be used to repel armed attacks or why the budgets used to build

[32] It allocated $6.1 million to eight projects (in Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Nepal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, the Sudan and Uganda), which as at August 2014 were mostly still being implemented.

[33] World Bank and International Monetary Fund, Joint Ministerial Committee of the Boards of Governors of the Bank and the Fund on the Transfer of Real Resources to Developing Countries, "Update on the implementation of the gender equality agenda at the World Bank Group" (Washington, D.C., 2014).

United Nations operating bases or regional offices cannot purchase basic office equipment for local officials striving to re-establish a State presence in the same areas. There is often a gap between expectations and the ability of the United Nations on the ground to deliver.

84. The second dimension concerns the quality and calibre of United Nations staff on the ground. If the Organization is to succeed, it must deploy staff of sufficient quality. Unfortunately, and all too frequently, the calibre of staff deployed appears well below that needed. Such challenges were evident in all the case studies and consultations undertaken for the present report. The management in several United Nations missions voiced concern about the difficulties in finding qualified and motivated individuals to fill critical posts. Administrative and bureaucratic hurdles were frequently cited as the cause. From the perspective of local interlocutors, meanwhile, United Nations personnel were often perceived as aloof, isolated and sometimes even disinterested in the populations whom they were supposed to be assisting.

85. A third dimension refers to the way in which the United Nations positions itself with regard to national leaders. In some of the case studies, but also in other contexts, lapses or relapses into violence appear, in part, to have had a link to the Organization's closeness to leaders whose strategies and interests proved not to be aligned with peacebuilding. In many situations of relapse, the leaders around whom peace agreements were framed turned out to have no sense of mutual purpose with broader society beyond their narrow self and group interests. If the population perceives the United Nations as too "close" to that kind of leader and insufficiently able to open questions of national ownership to broader national constituencies, the Organization's credibility suffers.

86. A related dimension concerns the often-overwhelming focus of peace efforts on the protagonists or individuals who bear arms, diminishing the attention given to the rest of society. Too often, no space is afforded for social conversations about the deep-seated causes of the conflict and the collective aspirations for building a more harmonious nation (a criticism particularly levelled from the perspective of women organizing for peace). Without an approach to leadership that seeks to encourage a sense of common purpose between elites and the broader society, the United Nations and those responding to conflict risk the continuation of the cycle of conflict. When populations systematically suffer at the hands of leaders whom they perceive as supported by the United Nations, there is a risk that that will erode the credibility of the Organization. To recover, the Organization must strive to remain on the moral high ground — the main factor that has set it apart from other global actors — and restore the trust of the populations whom it seeks to protect.

87. Invariably, getting this leadership factor right has a bearing on the demand for inclusive peacebuilding and the question of ownership. The arguments against imported peace and against elite peace are both valid. Experience shows that neither is inclusive or long lasting. Peace agendas must reflect the mutual aspirations of protagonists and the larger society: only when this is achieved can peacemaking or peacebuilding prove inclusive and lasting. Timor-Leste, for example, is a peacebuilding success story, not simply because of United Nations interventions and the international community's continued support, but all the more because of the wisdom of its national leaders and the ease with which they engaged with their people.

Timor-Leste: national leadership is critical to sustainable peace

A long history of colonialism followed by a quarter of a century of struggle against Indonesian occupation steeled a generation of political leaders in Timor-Leste who have made a key difference to sustaining peace in the country at critical junctures and in various ways.

A referendum overseen by the United Nations led to independence in 1999. Violence thereafter led to the deployment of an international force under a United Nations mandate, followed by successive United Nations missions with mandates shifting from transitional authority to peacekeeping to peacebuilding and back to peacekeeping again in the aftermath of internecine fighting in 2006.

After independence, national leaders opted for a truth and friendship commission with Indonesia, the United Nations advice to the contrary notwithstanding. The commission proved effective in seamlessly addressing reconciliation, peace consolidation and development. In building national reconciliation, the country's leaders used their traditional and culturally supported systems effectively to address recurrent tensions. Through those efforts Timor-Leste was able to address problems at the human level, including the division of families, the lack of livelihoods and, at least to some extent, individual trauma.

In dealing with natural resources, national leaders displayed similar farsightedness. The discovery of oil provided a windfall, which was well managed through a negotiated agreement with Australia to postpone the demarcation of the maritime boundary and to set up a petroleum fund modelled on that of Norway. Prudent limits were set on the Government's ability to draw from that fund for annual budgets.

A third example of sage leadership was the active effort to engage in regional and global platforms. Timor-Leste is a member and current Chair of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, a founder member and host of the secretariat of the Group of Seven Plus, which brings together fragile States to share experiences and advice, and an applicant for membership of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. In all this, Timor-Leste was helped by a positive approach from neighbouring countries, in particular Indonesia, which assisted greatly in stabilizing the country swiftly.

Support from a wide range of partners and the United Nations has made a critical difference to Timor-Leste, but its success can be largely attributed to careful prioritization by its leaders of what was central to building sustainable peace.

F. United Nations partnerships and peacebuilding

88. So great is the challenge of peacebuilding in political, technical and financial terms, however, that it is essential to build effective partnerships — first and foremost with national actors, but also with new groupings, regional and

international players and non-governmental organizations. Nevertheless, the review identified some serious impediments to the Organization's ability to partner for peacebuilding.

89. First, much of the dedicated discussion of peacebuilding is confined to New York, in the new peacebuilding entities created in 2005. There remains too little mirroring of such discussions among United Nations and other operational stakeholders on the ground, where the territory in-between crisis response and long-term development remains, for the most part, uncharted.

90. Second, new and highly active international initiatives dealing with the situation of fragile and conflict-affected countries have appeared on the international stage.[34] The Group of Seven Plus, for example, and as discussed earlier, has a membership of 20 countries that share experiences and undertake soft diplomacy on preventing conflict and on building peace. Drawing from their own experience, their advice is often to move more gradually along the course of actions advised by the international community and the United Nations, building confidence and capacity before, for example, rushing to elections. They also strongly call attention to the link between peacebuilding and development.

91. Third, as is well known, the Charter contemplates regional arrangements in its Chapter VIII for matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. Deepened partnerships with regional and subregional organizations on peacemaking and peacekeeping have developed both at the intergovernmental level (for example between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union) and between secretariats and operational units[35] in Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, Central Europe and, especially, Africa. Similar cooperation in the area of peacebuilding has yet to materialize. The Peacebuilding Commission may be able to play a part in efforts to engender such partnerships.

92. It generally holds true that regional and subregional partners are well placed to have a detailed understanding of the situation on the ground in their member States and presumably some leverage to influence outcomes. One important caveat, however, is that, precisely owing to proximity and interdependence, regional and subregional actors may also be indirectly involved in the conflict, especially when neighbouring States are involved. That is why a case-by-case analysis is warranted before concluding that the perceived comparative advantages outweigh any potential negative aspects. The generally acknowledged comparative advantages of the United Nations remain its impartiality, its universality, its global reach, the responsibilities bestowed upon it by the Charter and its comparative access to resources (both financial and human).

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[34] For example, the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State-building; the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (emerging from the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, in 2011); the International Network on Conflict and Fragility established in 2009 as a subsidiary body of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Development Assistance Committee; or the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, a partnership between the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, Interpeace, the Geneva Centre for Security Policy and the Quaker United Nations Office (in both Geneva and New York).

[35] The African Union maintains an observer mission at the United Nations, while the United Nations has established an important liaison office at the Union.

93. In the course of the growing engagement between regional and global actors, other issues have emerged, especially regarding the distribution of responsibilities ("who does what" and who is the leading decision maker), possible differences in strategies and policies, and matters of distribution of costs and financing. All have surfaced in the area of peacemaking and peacekeeping and will most likely surface again as cooperation builds in the area of the Organization's peacebuilding engagement.

94. An important lesson learned, therefore, is that the United Nations must better define the scope, content and rules that frame its partnerships with other major stakeholders, whether global, regional or local, public or private. In that context, the partnership between the United Nations and the European Union deserves special attention, because in part it involves joint endeavours between a global and a regional entity and in part a partnership between two global players. The Union certainly has global reach and has become a major global actor in peace and security and development. Both the United Nations and the Union have developed specific instruments to deal with post-conflict and conflict-affected countries. The work of the Peacebuilding Fund finds its counterpart in the Union's Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, one of the key external assistance initiatives enabling the Union to respond to actual or emerging crises around the world.

South Sudan: a tragedy of endowment and lack of vision?

The referendum in 2011 that led to the birth of South Sudan, following a six-year transition period guided by a comprehensive peace agreement, led to widespread celebrations at the emergence of a new, oil-rich country following decades of civil war. Indeed, it further raised already great expectations for the building of a viable, stable and prosperous South Sudan. Those were tragically dashed, however, when, in December 2013, South Sudan descended once again into violent conflict and society polarized along ethnic lines.

Several factors lie at the root of the crisis. First, the fault lines in South Sudanese society remain unaddressed. The country's 64 tribes shared no common history of nationhood and the people were far from unified even on the eve of independence. Second and related to that, the lack of common bonds was overlooked in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the ensuing transition period. In the period after independence, little attention was paid to building a national vision, cohesion or identity. Infrastructure in the geographically large and, at times, inaccessible territory was also severely underdeveloped, with the country and its people in dire need of the roads, schools, hospitals and other basic infrastructure that would help to lay a physical foundation for the nation to move forward in a unified manner and that many had expected would accompany peace.

The approach to peacebuilding also fell short of addressing critical leadership deficits, both externally and nationally. To ensure the security of the newborn State and to help it to build peace, State institutions and capacity, the United Nations deployed the United Nations Mission in South Sudan with a hybrid mandate of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. However, neither the Comprehensive Peace Agreement nor the

peacebuilding effort developed an agenda for steering the leaders of South Sudan and the populations over whom they presided towards a common national vision. The leaders of independent South Sudan focused attention and resources on the conflict with the Sudan and the pursuit of narrow interests. The challenges of building capacity to maintain internal security in the face of ongoing intercommunal conflicts in several parts of the country, contending with the continued existence of armed groups or managing the country's significant resources to deliver the most basic services to its people were left largely to the international community.

In effect, key elements of a nation State were absent. Many of the disparate militias of the pre-independence years, including those that had fought against the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), were now only loosely integrated into SPLA, leaving their organizational structures and command effectively unchanged. Various SPLA units remained separated by ethnicity and faction and their militia leaders became their commanding generals. Furthermore, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement remains in liberation mode and has yet to transform itself effectively into a political party. As such, it continues to be tightly linked to its military wing, SPLA.

The divergent interests of a range of external actors, not least neighbouring States, contribute to the elusiveness of peace in South Sudan. At the same time, the converging of regional peace efforts — the Intergovernmental Authority on Development process in Addis Ababa led by Ethiopia and the Arusha process led by the United Republic of Tanzania and South Africa — illustrates that regional bilateral actors and multilateral institutions have the potential to play significant and visible roles in peacebuilding.

Overall, sustainable peace remains elusive in South Sudan. In the absence of more effective leadership and of a relevant vision for sustaining peace, it has become difficult for either internal or external actors to rally around a strategy for moving such an agenda forward. What was euphorically envisaged as a potentially stable and prosperous State now appears as a tragedy of endowment.

G. Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Support Office

95. The new peacebuilding entities established in 2005 had as their background the fragmented United Nations landscape characterized above. In particular, the intention behind the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission was precisely that it would build bridges between the three pillars of peace and security, development and human rights. It was even hoped that the Commission would help to transcend the traditional divide between the Security Council, the General Assembly and the

Economic and Social Council, given that 21 of its members were nominated, in equal proportion, by each of those three principal intergovernmental organs.[36]

96. Instead, the Commission was rapidly condemned to occupy a sort of no-man's land within the fragmented landscape to which it now belonged. Having been created with a subsidiary role to the principal intergovernmental organs, especially the Security Council (the Commission is an intergovernmental advisory body and even then its recommendations must be formulated on the basis of consensus), the Commission had difficulty finding eager takers for its advice.[37] The situation was further aggravated by the disconnect between the members of the Commission and the principal organ that nominated them, frustrating the original intention that its members should feel a sense of collective ownership of the new entity.

97. There are sufficient metrics available to substantiate the impression that the expected impact of the Commission has yet to be realized (see A/64/868-S/2010/393). The primary example is the small number of countries on the Commission's agenda, and the apparent resistance shown by other States to joining that number, compared with the number of contexts that could plausibly be considered in a peacebuilding mode globally. Some 32 countries have been designated as recipients of financing from the Peacebuilding Fund over its 10-year existence, for example, eclipsing the 6 that have ever been formal objects of the Commission's agenda.

98. In addition, the Commission is clearly a body based in New York and therefore assigned only functions that can be carried out at Headquarters in support of a process that, by definition, takes place on the ground. Those functions include engaging in advocacy, providing assistance in marshalling resources, providing assistance in improving coordination within and outside the United Nations, engaging in strategic thinking and formulating policy recommendations and offering a meeting place for interested parties. The divisions between what could be achieved at Headquarters and what could be carried out in the field became somewhat blurred, however, as the Commission's country-specific configurations progressively took on a life of their own and occupied the space that might otherwise have been the Commission's as a whole.

99. Related thereto are the working methods of the Commission. There are continuing questions as to the relevance of the periodic meetings of the Commission's Organizational Committee, which until recently had been found to be too formulaic — although some recent gatherings have been more substantive and deemed more useful. The Working Group on Lessons Learned, which is a subsidiary body not contemplated in the Commission's founding resolutions, has piloted some interesting processes, including on the management of United Nations mission transitions and on institution-building. The general sense, however, is that the debates have not added all that they could to the collective wisdom on peacebuilding.

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[36] The inclusion of five representatives of the major troop contributors and five representatives of the major contributors to the United Nations budget raises some additional issues relating to their specific interests.

[37] While the Security Council regularly receives the yearly reports of the Peacebuilding Commission and occasionally invites its President to formulate statements in open debates, the engagement between the Council and the Commission tends to take on a more formal tone than a substantive one.

100. Positive examples where the Commission and its country-specific configurations have contributed can readily be found, including the recent and commendable work of the Commission in highlighting the impact of the Ebola crisis on the development of several West African countries and the manner in which it has been able to convene discussions among a broad array of actors around the current crisis in Burundi or the need for predictable funding for peacebuilding. On the other hand, it has to be noted that not all country-specific configurations, at all points along the arc of their engagement, were able to work out productive divisions of labour with the Organization's operational arms on the ground. The Commission has also remained somewhat underused and undersupported by those United Nations departments and programmes with direct operational peacebuilding responsibilities, principally the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNDP.

101. The work of the Commission on the subregional dimensions of the Ebola crisis prompts the thought that — newly reinvigorated — it may be able to contribute greatly to fostering strategic coherence at the regional level concerning peacebuilding. Currently, however, it has not always been able to adapt its structures, mechanisms and working methods to facilitate active engagement with regional organizations, notwithstanding the obvious potential for greatly strengthening, for example, cooperation on peacebuilding with the African Union. While the Union has a post-conflict reconstruction and development framework and an African solidarity initiative that encourages South-South cooperation, to date little has been done by the Commission or the Union to achieve greater synergy in their respective activities in peacebuilding in Africa.

102. Individual country-specific configuration Chairs have sometimes been able to add value. On the whole, however, the configurations have proved time-consuming, unclear and improvisational in objectives and outcomes and insufficiently relevant to the countries on their national agendas. Originally conceived as a proxy for the "friends of" formula successfully implemented by the United Nations in peace efforts beginning in the 1980s, the configurations became open forums that met frequently, often attended by numerous participants but at low levels of diplomatic representation and sometimes without host country participation. Where it had been hoped that the configuration would become a vehicle for close concert with the international financial institutions on countries of focus, the institutions generally report finding the utility of configuration meetings too low to engage their interest.

103. Another feature that limits the effectiveness of the Commission as a whole is that the performance of the country-specific configurations has become heavily dependent on the personal qualities and dedication of their Chairs (many of them long-serving) and the resources available to them. Indeed, the work of the configurations appears by now to have crowded out the Commission's overall primacy and convening power. It is worth recalling that no mention of the establishment of configurations was made in the founding resolutions of the Commission. Rather, it was envisaged that the Organizational Committee could convene country-specific meetings of the Commission, to which, in addition to members of the Committee, might be invited representatives of the country in question, countries in the region, financial contributors, troop- and police-contributing countries, senior United Nations field and other representatives and key international financial institutions and regional organizations. The success with which some of the configurations have operated notwithstanding, to a degree they

may have done so at the expense of flexibility and of engaging the attention of the Commission as a whole.

104. The Commission relies on its own secretariat, the Peacebuilding Support Office, to underpin its substantive activities. The Office was understaffed from the outset[38] and has had to dedicate most of its scarce resources to providing secretarial support to the meetings of the Commission and the country-specific configurations, with little time for in-depth policy analysis on dealing with conflict-affected States or on what drives the recurrence of conflict.

105. None of those perceived weaknesses explain, by themselves, the unrealized expectations of the Commission or the other new peacebuilding entities created in 2005. Taken together, however, especially in the broader context of the fragmentation mentioned above, they clarify some of the challenges that stand in the way of attaining a greater level of relevancy. Again, many of the observations had already been made in the 2010 review, but relatively little was done in the ensuing period to heed the recommendations.

Burundi: building resilience?

The overall progress towards peace accomplished in Burundi until the most recent crisis resulted from a unique combination of national willingness to compromise coupled with concerted support and engagement by the region and the international community, including the United Nations. Unlike a number of other crisis countries, Burundi can be said to have long had relatively strong institutions and the characteristics of a nation State (a long, precolonial cultural and political history within a defined geographic space). Accordingly, the conflict in Burundi was, for the most part, contained within its borders and the underpinnings of the violence were far more linked to injustice and the abuse of political power than to weak administrative structures or governance. The beginning to ending the conflict came through the signing of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi in 2000, which provided a political road map for the country based on power-sharing and dialogue.

The Arusha Agreement also established a framework for the international community's support, and there followed a succession of United Nations mission deployments. In 2006, Burundi became one of the first countries to be referred to the agenda of the newly created Peacebuilding Commission by the Security Council. The integrated United Nations leadership on the ground, in the person of an executive representative of the Secretary-General (uniting responsibilities both for the mission and the United Nations country team) was mirrored with the formation of a country-specific configuration of the Commission as an additional focus for engagement at the intergovernmental level. The Peacebuilding Fund provided significant resources that allowed for the funding of key — and, in some cases, non-traditional — activities in support of peace consolidation, including strengthening inter-party

[38] In paragraph 23 of Security Council resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly resolution 60/180, the Secretary-General was requested to establish a small peacebuilding support office.

dialogue and advancing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform. The Commission ensured continued focus from New York, was able to help to catalyse significant additional funding and, in particular in the latter stages of engagement, worked out a productive partnership with the Organization's leadership on the ground.

At the time of writing of the present report, Burundi was facing serious new tensions. The President's decision to stand for a third term has created strong divisions both within society and the political establishment. Paradoxically, however, the situation to date still serves to underline the comparative success of the Arusha Agreement. The deployment of Burundian forces in Somalia over recent years — testament in itself to the durability of the power-sharing arrangements foreseen in the Agreement for key institutions such as the army — may have helped to forge a greater national identity within it. A number of institutions of the State have, in fact, demonstrated their resistance to being drawn directly into the political confrontations. In addition, the strong tensions that have surfaced around the current crisis have remained political and thankfully not yet led to a resumption of inter-ethnic confrontation.

Unfortunately, by the time of the current crisis, the United Nations on the ground had forfeited much of its relevance. The Organization had been unable to maintain its political leadership role in the course of its transition from a mission to a more classical "non-mission" United Nations resident coordinator and United Nations country team structure (with a small electoral observation mission, the United Nations Electoral Observer Mission in Burundi). The delays in fielding a new leadership team and mobilizing the necessary support clearly contributed to the reduction in the Organization's credibility and influence. Possibly of greater impact, however, was the new structure's inability, or even unwillingness, to contest the Government's insistence that it had no legitimacy or mandate to raise political issues. Against this, and alongside the Security Council, over the recent months the Peacebuilding Commission has proved to be an effective and useful venue for broader format discussions among international partners on how to support those seeking to bring the current crisis to a peaceful conclusion.

H. Peacebuilding financing and Peacebuilding Fund

106. Countries emerging from conflict require significant financing over extended periods, yet, a decade of focus on peacebuilding notwithstanding, financing remains scarce, inconsistent and unpredictable. Although per capita official development assistance to what the World Bank classifies as fragile and conflict-affected States has almost doubled since 2000 (and now constitutes about half of all official development assistance), almost one quarter of that went to just two countries: Afghanistan and Iraq. As recently as 2012, only 6 per cent of foreign direct investment in developing country contexts went to such countries, and the bulk of that to just a small number of resource-rich States.[15]

107. Meanwhile, to note the marked imbalance between the allocations available for peacebuilding and the global funding either for humanitarian response (estimated at $24.5 billion for 2014, of which $18.7 billion represented assistance from Governments,[39] an almost four-and-a-half-fold increase within a 10-year period)[40] or for peacekeeping (now annually in the range of $8 billion, according to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations) is not to doubt the importance of either form of response. It is, however, to invite the obvious thought: if more global priority were consistently given to efforts to sustain peace, might there not, over the course of time, be a reduced need for crisis response?

108. Even within existing peacebuilding assistance there is a misalignment between priorities and flows. Assistance to the key peacebuilding sectors identified by the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State-building (legitimate politics, security, justice, economic foundations, and revenues and services) remains tiny. In 2012, just 4 per cent of total official development assistance to fragile and conflict-affected States was allocated to legitimate politics, 2 per cent to security (and just 1.2 per cent to security sector reform) and 3 per cent to justice.[15] Just 6 per cent targeted gender equality as a principal objective.[41] The vast majority was devoted to other sectors altogether in 2012-2013. Worse, when the major recipients, Iraq and Afghanistan, are put to one side, the percentage devoted to the security sector falls to just 1 per cent of the whole. In short, the clear demand to direct official development assistance to key sectors notwithstanding, donor behaviour has changed very little.

109. The paucity of funding can distort priority-setting by the United Nations and recipients alike. Countries emerging from conflict may have to subordinate their own priorities to the templates of financial institutions, while programmes and agencies of the United Nations system sometimes compete for scarce resources to advance their activities — the fragmentation of the United Nations system aggravated by a fragmented donor landscape. Despite much attention apparently being given to improving good donorship, assistance to conflict-affected contexts remains characterized by what has been termed "cherry-picking", "flag-planting", a seemingly innate preference for covering fixed costs (such as rebuilding clinics or schools) rather than recurrent ones (paying salaries to teachers or health workers) and a large-scale aversion to taking the risks inherent in financing in such contexts.

110. Pooled funds have proved attractive for sharing risk by uniting the resources of multiple donors and the capacities of multiple deliverers of programming. The Multi-Partner Trust Fund established in 2014 in Somalia brings together the Government, the United Nations, the World Bank and the African Development Bank and the Special Financing Facility under common governance arrangements. It has two windows, one for United Nations agencies and one for national entities, and is equipped with a risk management strategy. Its somewhat uneven performance to date, however, illustrates the tension between principles of speed, inclusive governance, risk tolerance and national ownership. While there are and always will

[39] See *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2015*. Available from www.globalhumanitarian assistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/GHA-Report-2015_-Interactive_Online.pdf.

[40] Rahul Chandran, "It's broke, so fix it: humanitarian response in crisis" (Tokyo, United Nations University, Centre for Policy Research, 2015). Available from http://cpr.unu.edu/its-broke-so-fix-it-humanitarian-response-in-crisis.html.

[41] See www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/financingunsecuritycouncilresolution1325aidin supportofgenderequalityandwomensrightsinfragilecontexts.htm.

be trade-offs between those principles, what is important is that the United Nations and its partners make conscious choices around those trade-offs and employ a judicious mix of instruments across peacebuilding engagements, pooling risk to the extent possible.

111. In a global context of aid shortfalls, in particular for conflict-affected "aid orphans", national revenue mobilization is increasingly seen as a crucial source of financing. Some post-conflict countries have managed to improve local revenues impressively through institution-building efforts. Burundi, for example, achieved strong revenue growth until 2013, when new legislation suddenly reduced the tax base again. Countries rich in natural resources enjoy a potential advantage, but one obviously hampered by persistent poor governance. The Organization's record in assisting in those efforts is, to date, mixed. A recent high-level panel has underlined that every year the African continent still loses at least $50 billion through illicit financial outflows — an enormous loss for peacebuilding and development.[42] Only joint action by the countries concerned and those where the funds are being deposited can staunch that haemorrhage.

112. When the Organization's new peacebuilding entities were established, addressing the financing cliff faced in the aftermath of conflict was a major motivation. The Peacebuilding Fund was created to mobilize emergency financing and bridge the vast divide between funding needs and funding availability. The Fund has since played an important role in providing financing to countries emerging from conflict or conflict-affected countries, as well as in advancing strategic alignment between the United Nations and the international financial institutions. In 2014, the Fund allocated $99.4 million to 16 countries, continuing an increasing trend from previous years, and total contributions to the Fund in the amount of $78.2 million were made by 21 Member States.

113. The interventions of the Peacebuilding Fund have shown particular effect in the case studies that underpin the present report where they have been rapid, flexible and provided funding for crucial interventions that were too laden with risk (political or financial) for more conventional funding streams. Its Immediate Response Facility has proved particularly timely in several of its interventions, such as helping to keep the police on the streets in the Central African Republic in 2014 at the moment of deepest crisis by defraying a considerable proportion of the public sector payroll for months at a time. The Fund's other window, the Peacebuilding Recovery Facility, has also seen success over the years. In a number of the case studies, however, national authorities and other partners questioned whether the still comparatively small envelopes of funding that could be delivered (especially when divided across multiple United Nations implementing partners) were outweighed by the window's relatively more burdensome administrative procedures.

114. The Peacebuilding Fund functions under the direct responsibility of the Secretary-General, with its own governing body (strongly influenced by its donors) and an administration under the auspices of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund of UNDP. Early on, there was relative alignment between those countries benefitting from

[42] *Illicit Financial Flows: Report of the High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa*, available from www.uneca.org/publications/illicit-financial-flows. It is notable that the Panel attributes most of those outflows not to domestic corruption, as is usually assumed, but to the activities of unregulated or underregulated multinational corporations.

attention and accompaniment by the Peacebuilding Commission and those receiving support from the Fund, but the past five years or so have seen a divergence.

115. Meanwhile, with total resources of some $650 million, and a disbursement in the range of $100 million annually spread across somewhere in the region of 20 countries, the Peacebuilding Fund alone is simply too small to achieve the impact required. The goal that its funding should catalyse larger resource flows from other sources has largely failed to materialize. It is the conclusion of the Advisory Group, therefore, that the Fund should play to its strengths and continue to sharpen its niche as a rapid, impactful, procedurally light and risk-taking investor of first resort in efforts to sustain peace.

116. The United Nations as a whole is unlikely in the foreseeable future to have access to the volume of financial resources needed for the full scale of global peacebuilding needs. Here again, therefore, effective partnerships are a prerequisite for sustaining peace, this time with the international financial institutions and other new sources of financing. An important step was taken in October 2008 with the signing of a partnership framework between the United Nations and the World Bank Group for crisis and post-crisis situations. While recognizing that their roles, mandates and systems of governance differed, both parties acknowledged that their respective efforts were interdependent and mutually reinforcing. The basis for the partnership was not just goodwill but the comparative advantages of the two organizations: the United Nations with its political mandates, presence on the ground and primacy in terms of international peace and security, and the Bank with its development mandates, comparatively more centralized structure and core role in development financing.

117. While what the World Bank refers to as fragile and conflict-affected States still constitute a relatively small part of its portfolio, they have been growing in importance in recent years. During its most recent replenishment of its International Development Association resources, the Bank specifically developed an exceptional allocation regime for countries facing turnaround situations, including post-conflict countries. In doing so, it noted:

> Coordinated action constitutes a vital aspect of [International Development Association] engagement in [fragile and conflict-affected States]. In particular, the Bank and the [United Nations] are strongly committed to streamline and enhance their partnership through closer collaboration at the country level, expanding thematic collaboration, coordinating their support to national leadership through the New Deal process and addressing implementation challenges.[43]

118. Following from the *World Development Report 2011*, the World Bank created a centre on conflict, security and development, a specialized unit with a staff of experts co-located in Nairobi and Washington, D.C., signalling the enhanced interest in fragile and conflict-affected States within the Bank. The much-touted joint visits to a number of conflict-affected countries and regions by the Secretary-General and the President of the Bank also indicate moves in the right direction. In general, however, more could be done to make the important findings and recommendations

[43] International Development Association, "IDA's support to fragile and conflict-affected States" (Washington, D.C., World Bank, March 2013). Available from http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2013/03/17427227/ida%C2%92s-support-fragile-conflict-affected-states.

of the *World Development Report 2011* operational, and there are even concerns that the agenda may be suffering under the Bank's current internal reorganization.

119. Moreover, the distinct bureaucratic cultures of the World Bank and the United Nations have continued to impede more rapid progress in coordination and cooperation, in particular at the operational level. Nevertheless, it is precisely in peacebuilding that a strong incentive exists for them to cooperate, as shown by the recent and pioneering establishment of small-scale joint facilities in both Yemen and Somalia — settings where the Organization's significant political engagement and the Bank's financial and programmatic muscle could productively unite.

IV. Way forward: conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

120. The Advisory Group draws overarching conclusions with ramifications for the United Nations, Member States and broader international efforts towards sustaining peace, both operationally and in terms of norms, standards and approaches.

121. The first is that violent conflicts around the world have become significantly more complex over the first decade and a half of the current century, with new conflict drivers layered on long-standing drivers. International actors, including within the United Nations system, have yet to absorb fully how their tools and actions must adapt and, in general, too often prefer militarized responses. While such responses can prove effective in the immediate context of halting violence, they tend to address symptoms rather than root causes. The very nature of such responses, with their emphasis on short-term security and their correspondingly heavy resourcing needs, can sometimes take away support and attention from efforts to achieve sustainable peace.

122. The second is that the United Nations must see sustaining peace as the core task set for it by the Charter, and, thus, as the thread that must flow through all its engagements, from preventive action to peacemaking, peace enforcement, peacekeeping and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction engagement. Sustaining peace should span an essential combination of actions across the diplomatic, political, human rights, economic, social and security areas, with particular attention to tackling the root causes.

123. Third, however, peacebuilding has instead been relegated to a peripheral activity. Within the United Nations, efforts to sustain peace should be accorded high priority in terms of resources, capacity and organizational hierarchy. A change in mindset is needed: rather than waiting until a crisis breaks out and then making a default recourse to a crisis response, timely efforts to prevent conflict and then sustain peace need to be embedded across all sectors and phases of action. When peace operations are deployed, they must, from the beginning, see their purpose as being to maximize the creation of space and opportunity for peacebuilding efforts to advance. They should also plan for and benchmark their own exit strategies from the beginning, with a vision of how to ensure effective and appropriately timed follow-on engagement.

124. Fourth, it follows directly from the above that the Organization's peacebuilding architecture should not be considered to be limited merely to the

structures of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office — notwithstanding their names or how valiantly they may have worked over the past 10 years. Indeed, much as the term "post-conflict peacebuilding" should be abandoned as misleading, the same can be said for the term "peacebuilding architecture". The challenge of sustaining peace demands the priority, attention and effort of the entire United Nations system, including the three principal intergovernmental organs.

125. Fifth, however, the United Nations system is fragmented at every level — in the intergovernmental organs, in Headquarters arrangements and all the way to the operational level. Very significant impediments to the needed systemic response must be overcome. At the intergovernmental level, the Security Council is, and must understand itself to be, one of the principal peacebuilding actors, if not the principal actor, in partnership with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The Peacebuilding Commission, if its work is reoriented, can become the necessary and effective bridge, acting as the advisory body between those organs.

126. Sixth, at the operational level, the continuity of United Nations engagement in sustaining peace is challenged by the proliferation of operational formats, ranging from mediation teams in the peacemaking phase (not always led by the United Nations, nor necessarily accountable to it), to large peacekeeping operations, through smaller follow-on special political missions to regular engagement by resident coordinators heading United Nations country teams. The transitions between those arrangements are frequently poorly timed and poorly managed, further impairing continuity. The greatest gap in continuity often occurs in the transition from a mission to a regular country team engagement, with a crucial effect on the progress of peacebuilding.

127. Seventh, sustaining peace is, in essence, about individuals and groups learning to live together without resorting to violence to resolve conflicts and disputes. It must be people-centred and inclusive in approach, and provide a vision of a common future to national stakeholders, public and private. External actors, including the United Nations, can accompany and facilitate, but cannot impose peace. To that end, the Organization's approach to sustaining peace, in all phases, must be underpinned by a deep commitment to broadening inclusion and ownership on the part of all stakeholders across the societies in which it works. Neither peace agreements nor the implementation processes that follow them are likely to prosper unless they look beyond the narrow interests of the belligerents to a framework that can engage a society's broad and emergent vision of itself.

128. Eighth, the United Nations is not the only, and often not even the main, external actor. The task of sustaining peace globally goes well beyond the Organization's current capacity to deliver on its own in political, technical or financial terms. Partnering better with multilateral, existing and emerging regional and subregional actors and civil society is essential to making peace sustainable.

129. Lastly, truly ensuring that peace is sustained requires much longer-term engagement and accompaniment than currently recognized. Owing to the imperative to halt violence, early peacebuilding efforts have often used a template that has proved flawed: a hasty and supposedly comprehensive peace agreement, a brief transition arrangement, hurried elections and a rapid drawdown. Too frequently, that proves a recipe for relapse. As a result of all those factors, combined in many cases with weak leadership, the Organization's credibility is suffering.

B. Recommendations

130. The following are interconnected recommendations relating to the functioning, resources and modes of United Nations efforts to sustain peace. It is urged that they be taken up together and that the Secretary-General be asked by Member States to monitor and report regularly on progress in implementation.

Promoting coherence at the intergovernmental level

131. Within the United Nations, sustaining peace is the business of all intergovernmental entities and should not be relegated to consideration only by the Peacebuilding Commission, which is not a principal organ under the Charter. Paradoxically, what some would argue is an inherent weakness of the Commission — being limited to an advisory role — can become one of its main and unappreciated strengths, by offering the relevant principal organs a bridge between them, helping to ensure a United Nations approach to sustaining peace that is coherent, integrated and holistic.

132. To strengthen its role as a primary peacebuilding body, the Security Council should consider regularly requesting and drawing upon the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission to assist in ensuring that the mandates, benchmarks and reviews of peace operations, however short-term in scope, reflect the longer view required for sustaining peace. The Council should further ensure that the mandates for peacebuilding missions emphasize the imperative for an integrated mission that draws upon the strengths of the entire United Nations system.

133. Where the decision is taken by the Security Council to establish a peace operation, it should build on existing United Nations and other capabilities and integrate existing United Nations country team activities into enhanced peacebuilding efforts during the mission period. The country teams must therefore be appropriately resourced. In approving the leadership structures of missions, the Council should underline integration and accountability.

134. The Security Council, the Secretary-General (through mission leadership on the ground) and the national authorities in conflict-affected countries should together agree upon peacebuilding compacts that would govern decisions on the appropriate timing of mission transitions, keeping in mind the need to adapt to the changing dynamics of the conflict. In that connection, the Council should consider systematically assessing benchmarking in mandates relating to sustaining peace and specifically in the timing of mission transitions. Where such compacts or benchmarks have been agreed upon with a host Government to condition such a transition's timing, every effort should be made to ensure that that agreement is adhered to, again keeping in mind the need to adapt to the changing dynamics of the conflict.

135. The Security Council should consider passing to the Peacebuilding Commission's responsibility continued accompaniment of countries on the Council's agenda where and when peace consolidation has progressed to the point that it is deemed that they no longer constitute a threat to international peace and security. The Commission should then keep the Council briefed on further progress in peace consolidation on at least a yearly basis.

136. Building on its past experience with African countries emerging from conflict, as well as the activities of its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, the Economic and

Social Council should consider developing criteria for a special category of conflict-affected countries — perhaps drawing on the guidelines that the Group of Seven Plus has agreed upon for its membership — to which the international community would be encouraged to devote special attention and funding, not only for peace operations but also for governance, human rights and development activities. The Council and the Peacebuilding Commission should pursue closer cooperation, especially in the broader effort of promoting coherence between the development and the peace and security pillars.

137. In its next and subsequent quadrennial comprehensive policy reviews, the General Assembly should include a specific focus on sustaining peace, examining the success of the United Nations system in bringing together development, humanitarian and peace and security actions.

138. The Human Rights Council should consider dedicating a day each year to reviewing the human rights dimensions of the challenge of sustaining peace, with a focus on specific countries and with the participation of national human rights institutions, relevant civil society actors and, as appropriate, United Nations missions, United Nations country teams, including in particular field offices of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and United Nations gender advisers and other appropriate entities of the United Nations system.

139. The Human Rights Council should also, when turning its attention to conflict-affected countries in its universal periodic review process, consider including a specific discussion on sustaining peace and the role of the international community therein.

Peacebuilding Commission

140. The main functions of the Peacebuilding Commission should continue to be engaging in advocacy, providing assistance in marshalling resources, providing assistance in improving coordination within and outside the United Nations, engaging in strategic thinking and formulating policy recommendations and offering a meeting place for interested parties. The manner in which those functions would be carried out should change qualitatively, however, by emphasizing an advisory and bridging relationship with the three principal intergovernmental organs.

141. To strengthen the Commission's bridging role, members of the Commission, in addition to representing their national interests, should understand themselves as accountable to the organs that elected or designated them and should brief those entities regularly on their work.

142. The Commission should maximize the work — including country-specific and region-specific discussions and engagement — that it undertakes in the full format of its Organizational Committee, taking advantage of its membership's designation by all the key United Nations organs and constituencies.

143. The Commission should actively seek opportunities where it can help to bring needed attention to early conflict prevention priorities at the regional, subregional and country levels, including by convening discussions with key stakeholders.

144. The Commission should diversify its working methods, including by moving away from the strictures of a formal agenda, to enable it to consider with flexibility a larger and more diverse array of countries and regions, with a greater emphasis on

conflict prevention. In particular, country-specific configurations should represent only one model for Commission engagement. Where configurations are formed in the future, they should have a smaller and more directly engaged membership, along the lines of the "group of friends" model, with a primarily advocacy role.

145. The Commission should make its advice and support available to the Security Council in the formulation of peace operation mandates containing a strong peacebuilding aspect. In doing so, the Commission should use its convening power to bring together all relevant actors, including peace operations, United Nations country teams, government actors, Member States, international, regional and subregional organizations and institutions, civil society and international financial institutions. The Commission should analyse their input practically and present the Council with concise, realistic and context-specific recommendations in a timely way. Likewise, it should offer to support the Council's formulation of benchmarks for progress in consolidating peace that, in turn, can help to condition the timing of changes in the form of United Nations operational engagement.

146. Following the designation by the Secretary-General of a country's eligibility for financing from the Peacebuilding Fund, the Commission should, in consultation with the permanent representative of the country in question, consider convening discussions within the format of the full Organizational Committee on the country's goals for and approach to sustaining peace.

147. The Commission should regularize and structure consultation with global and other civil society peacebuilding platforms, including in the format of an annual consultation on sustaining peace. It should take additional steps to become more transparent in scheduling and publishing its forward work programme so that civil society can more easily engage with it.

Improving the peacebuilding capability of the United Nations system

148. To promote unity of United Nations action, the Secretary-General should strengthen the Secretariat's capacity to conduct strategic planning throughout the United Nations system for engagement in conflict-prone and conflict-affected contexts. The Peacebuilding Support Office should provide advice to the Secretary-General on encouraging system-wide action in supporting efforts to sustain peace. To support that, the Office should be strengthened to become a centre of excellence in the areas of analysis, policy prescription and programme advice, as well as tracking developments in the field.

149. The General Assembly should consider taking the steps necessary to ensure a reinforced Peacebuilding Support Office, sufficiently financed from the regular budget and with an enhanced number of Secretariat posts permanently assigned to it.

150. The Secretary-General should consider integrating objectives on sustaining peace into the performance compacts signed with the heads of all relevant departments in the Secretariat and other relevant United Nations entities.

151. The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination should consider dedicating one of its two sessions each year to discussing the challenge of sustaining peace, including ways in which the system can work better together. Those discussions should also be mirrored within the United Nations Development Group.

152. The Secretary-General should ensure continuity in senior leadership and personnel through the various phases of engagement, from preventive action to peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction, in order to minimize the disruption around transitions in forms of engagement.

153. The Secretary-General should select special representatives for their capacities and leadership qualities and hold them accountable for bringing the United Nations system together in-country around a common strategy for sustaining peace. Where peace operations are deployed and led by special representatives, they should be fully empowered to direct programme planning towards sustaining peace by the United Nations country team. Where circumstances dictate, the Secretary-General should consider using the model of an executive representative of the Secretary-General to lead peacebuilding missions, combining the functions of representative of the Secretary-General with resident coordinator of the United Nations system and resident representative of UNDP.

154. When the mandate of a peace operation contains a substantial peacebuilding dimension, the special representative or head of mission should lead the United Nations system to develop a common peacebuilding support strategy that integrates the United Nations country team's strategic planning instruments, such as the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, with conventional mission planning and funding instruments. That would provide for continuity of focus and funding for programmes when the country team continues its work after the mission's mandate ends.

155. To ensure appropriate support for the strengthening of resident coordinator and United Nations country team operations, the Secretary-General should consider calling for an independent review of the current capacity and potential for enhancement of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to aid in sustaining peace before, during and after conflicts in both United Nations mission and non-mission settings.

156. In peacebuilding contexts where United Nations engagement is led by resident coordinators and United Nations country teams, the Secretary-General should ensure that resident coordinators and the Secretariat systematize stronger and more effective two-way engagement.

157. Where a peace operation with a substantial peacebuilding mandate is drawing down, the reforms currently under way to strengthen the resident coordinator with formal authority over the United Nations country team should be accelerated and the offices of resident coordinators should be appropriately strengthened to absorb the relevant political and peacebuilding capacity of the departing mission. In appointing resident coordinators in such contexts, the Secretary-General should pay particular attention to ensuring that candidates have strategic, diplomatic and political skills and familiarity with and sensitivity to conflict or post-conflict settings and that they and their country teams are afforded appropriate levels of political support on the ground and from Headquarters.

158. The relevant United Nations entities should ensure that all resident coordinator offices are reinforced with standardized expertise in human rights, peace and conflict analysis, strategic planning and public information. The UNDP-Department of Political Affairs Joint Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict

Prevention, within which the deployment of peace and development advisers falls, should be fully and sustainably funded and expanded to all countries in need.

159. To promote better delivery of gender-sensitive peacebuilding, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (together with other relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes) and the lead departments responsible for peace operations, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, should actively explore enhanced ways to work in partnership.

Partnering for sustaining peace

160. The Security Council should consider including in all mandates with peacebuilding dimensions an explicit reference to the need for consultation and collaboration between the United Nations and the international financial institutions in planning and prioritization at the country level.

161. Especially concerning conflict-affected countries, the Secretary-General and the President of the World Bank should consider taking urgent steps to strengthen the partnership between the United Nations and the World Bank Group, including, in particular, the International Development Association, the International Finance Corporation and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency. Conflict-affected countries are those where synergies can best arise from the comparative advantages of both multilateral institutions. Invigorating the partnership requires systematic upstream consultation, alignment of country strategies and detailed technical engagement in priority sectors. The strategic results framework agreed upon by the United Nations and the Bank should be renewed and emphasized as a formal criterion for determining peacebuilding allocations and operations.

162. The Secretary-General and the President of the World Bank should particularly ensure deepened cooperation between the United Nations and the International Finance Corporation and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency to assist post-conflict countries to create an enabling environment for private sector development. Together with the Corporation and other partners, the United Nations should pay dedicated attention to efforts to promote employment and livelihoods, in particular among young people and in reintegrating former combatants, through, but not limited to, skills and entrepreneurship development and microfinance.

163. The Peacebuilding Commission and the World Bank Group should hold an annual high-level working session to discuss and assess joint United Nations-Group approaches to sustaining peace and propose new initiatives.

164. The Peacebuilding Commission should hold an annual exchange of views with those regional and subregional organizations engaged in efforts to promote sustainable peace. In particular, regular desk-to-desk exchanges and joint initiatives between the Peacebuilding Support Office and the equivalent structures within the African Union and other relevant subregional organizations should be considered. They could contribute, with appropriate engagement from other parts of the United Nations system, to the development of a partnership on peacebuilding with the Union.

165. The Peacebuilding Support Office, with other relevant United Nations entities, should engage in a regular policy dialogue with the International Monetary Fund and partners on the fiscal and macroeconomic dimensions of peacebuilding.

166. Consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter, and to ensure credible and effective regional partners with which to collaborate in situations requiring the establishment, consolidation and sustainment of peace, Member States should consider encouraging regional and subregional organizations around the world to consider progressively incorporating responsibilities relating to peace and conflict prevention into their charters and foundational documents.

167. The Secretary-General should direct relevant United Nations entities to deepen the Organization's partnership with the regional development banks through the strengthening of specific frameworks for strategic cooperation around efforts to sustain peace. Similar cooperation frameworks should also be sought with emerging multilateral institutions, such as the New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

More predictable peacebuilding financing, including the Peacebuilding Fund

168. To promote the rebalancing of global priorities in assistance and to enhance resource mobilization, the Peacebuilding Support Office, together with relevant entities within the United Nations and among the international financial institutions, should initiate a process of preparing more detailed and accurate country-by-country estimates of the overall funding needs for sustaining peace over the longer term. Such estimates will help the United Nations and partners to better understand their investments, better discuss compacts with national Governments about national contributions, identify prevailing gaps and justify global fundraising. Informed by those improved analytics from the overall costing exercise, and in consultation with its Advisory Group, an appropriate target should then be set for the level to which the Peacebuilding Fund should be scaled up.

169. Where a peace operation mandate implies a central United Nations role in programme assistance to core peacebuilding sectors appropriate to a specific country situation, the General Assembly, in close cooperation with the Security Council, should consider steps to ensure that mandate implementation is accompanied by an appropriate apportionment from assessed United Nations budgets for programme support. Such support should continue to be provided to United Nations country teams for a transitional period after mission drawdown.

170. To improve the delivery of peacebuilding mandates specifically where a special political mission is deployed, the General Assembly should urgently consider the recommendations made in 2011 by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the review of arrangements for funding and backstopping special political missions (A/66/7/Add.21) in response to the report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/66/340).

171. To maximize the potential and predictability of the Peacebuilding Fund, the General Assembly should consider steps to ensure that core funding representing $100 million or an approximate and symbolic 1 per cent of the value (whichever is higher) of the total United Nations budgets for peace operations (peacekeeping and special political missions together) be provided to it annually from assessed contributions under the United Nations budget. The assessed contributions should be provided in a way that ensures necessary oversight without undermining the Fund's comparative advantage as a fast, unearmarked, flexible and pre-positioned pooled fund working under terms of reference approved by the Assembly. The Fund should then leverage such funding to catalyse additional voluntary contributions.

172. A scaled-up Peacebuilding Fund should accord priority to funding activities that play to its comparative advantage as a rapid, impactful, procedurally light, risk-taking investor of first resort in efforts to sustain peace. By doing so, it will help to catalyse the support of larger players, including the international financial institutions and regional development banks, regional and subregional organizations and bilateral donors. This will demand that the Peacebuilding Fund maximally streamline its administrative procedures, build its staff's surge capacity to support rapid programme elaboration by partners on the ground and especially emphasize its Immediate Response Facility.

173. The Peacebuilding Fund should consider ways to use its leverage to encourage the United Nations system to empower and include civil society, local civil society in conflict-affected countries in particular, in all activities relating to sustaining peace and that civil society receive significant capacity-building support. The Fund should consider providing direct funding support to non-United Nations entities as a means of achieving that goal.

174. The Peacebuilding Fund should also consider developing a new funding area around efforts to strengthen the peacebuilding capacity of regional and subregional organizations.

175. In specific national peacebuilding contexts, the United Nations and the World Bank should collaborate to create enlarged funding platforms, bringing together the World Bank Group, bilateral donors and regional actors to pool resources, share and mitigate risk and maximize impact for sustaining peace. They should include a window for direct national implementation to promote national capacity and accountability.

176. Similarly, United Nations leaders in peacebuilding contexts should consider establishing pooled funds, with the possibility of catalytic support from the Peacebuilding Fund, to mitigate and share risk among funding partners, and to drive integration of United Nations programming around a central and politically informed strategy for sustaining peace.

177. The limited funds dedicated by international partners to peacebuilding are not always well prioritized or structured to support sustaining peace. As it transforms itself to work more effectively by taking a comprehensive approach to sustaining peace and involving all organizations in the system, the United Nations system should also set norms and standards to enable other partners to adhere to the same principles.

178. Governments of Member States should commit themselves to ensuring transparency and accountability in national revenues, including from natural resources, including by implementing the approaches and recommendations of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, the Kimberley Process and the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa. The United Nations system should work with the World Bank Group, regional development banks and other regional and international partners to combat corruption and improve national revenue generation in the aftermath of conflict, paying attention to private sector development, the role of remittances, strengthening national tax administration, natural resource management and addressing illicit financial flows.

Improving leadership and broadening inclusion

179. The United Nations, with its partners, should consider laying new emphasis on building national leadership as an integral part of a reconciliation and nation-building agenda, working to shift the focus away from the personal ambitions of protagonists to engaging in a common vision for the country.

180. United Nations mediators and facilitators should strive to support the crafting of peace agreements that reflect the broad aspirations of all stakeholders in conflict-affected societies and that integrate an agreed framework for sustaining peace. Where this is not possible, peace agreements should ensure that dialogue mechanisms are established that will progressively ensure the broadening of narrow peace deals into inclusive processes implicating wider groups of national actors, communities and civil society, including women's and youth organizations. Non-United Nations mediation efforts should also be encouraged to align their actions with such principles.

181. The United Nations system should take a clear stance against the culture of impunity in post-conflict settings and support Governments and civil society to tackle that obstacle to sustainable peacebuilding through political engagement and national and international processes of justice. The United Nations should equally set a high bar for its personnel and affiliates to abide by, with set integrity and accountability standards, allowing no vacuum in investigating and reprimanding wrongdoing and criminal acts. Immunity privileges cannot be allowed to compromise the integrity and global mission of the Organization.

182. The Secretary-General should direct the United Nations system to accelerate efforts to attain and then surpass his target of ensuring that at least 15 per cent of United Nations-managed funds in support of peacebuilding are dedicated to projects whose principal objective is to address women's specific needs, advance gender equality or empower women. Its achievement should be written into the performance compacts signed with senior United Nations leaders on the ground, in mission and non-mission settings, and backed up with an enhanced system for monitoring and tracking achievement. To further ensure adequate financing in that area, the Peacebuilding Fund should regularize its Gender Promotion Initiative as an ongoing, priority instrument.

183. The Peacebuilding Commission should play a particular role in advocating that national leaders commit themselves to according priority to gender equality and women's empowerment as part of national peacebuilding priorities. To underpin this, the Commission should urgently develop the strategy to strengthen the gender perspective in country-specific engagement that it foresaw in its report on its eighth session (A/69/818-S/2015/174). In support of that, the Peacebuilding Support Office, in its capacity as the secretariat of the Commission, should work closely with other pertinent parts of the United Nations system to ensure that gender expertise is available for the Commission's integration of gender into its country-specific and region-specific engagement.

184. The Peacebuilding Commission should play a similar role in advocating that national leaders commit themselves to including and empowering young people in national peacebuilding priorities and actions.

185. Where the Peacebuilding Commission elaborates strategic frameworks for sustaining peace with countries or regions affected by violent conflict, it should

ensure the fullest possible participation by a broad array of actors, including, in particular, civil society and women's organizations, in both design and implementation.

Redefining peacebuilding and implementing the recommendations

186. It is reiterated that peacebuilding should no longer be defined as merely a post-conflict activity within the United Nations or beyond. Understood as the challenge of sustaining peace, it must be the strong thread that runs through the complete cycle of United Nations engagement, from preventive action through deployment and subsequent drawdown of peace operations and beyond to post-conflict recovery and reconstruction.

187. Implementing that reconfigured conceptual framework requires, among other aspects, a change in mindset among Member States. A number of the recommendations contained herein require legislation, either from the General Assembly or the Security Council or both. The Assembly and Council should therefore consider adopting parallel resolutions that respond to the recommendations made herein and set out principles for their implementation.

188. Following from the previous recommendation, the General Assembly should consider adopting a subsequent resolution setting norms and standards for national and international activities in sustaining peace, drawing on key existing instruments and reports, and taking into account the relevant elements of the present report, the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/95-S/2015/446), the forthcoming high-level review of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the forthcoming results of the deliberations on the post-2015 development agenda, with particular attention to goals and targets that relate to peaceful societies.

189. Equally, the Security Council should consider adopting a subsequent resolution on sustaining peace, which sets norms and standards for engagement in peacebuilding by peace operations and which reflects on the reciprocal obligations of Member States, also drawing on the aforementioned elements.

190. The Security Council and the General Assembly, respectively, should ensure that all those resolutions include a strong gender dimension, recognizing the importance of gendered approaches to protection, prevention and participation for successful peacebuilding, drawing on core documents such as Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the six subsequent resolutions on the subject, general recommendation No. 30 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations and the seven-point action plan of the Secretary-General on gender-responsive peacebuilding.

191. Lastly, the United Nations membership should ensure that the spirit of proposed sustainable development goal 16 — promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels — forms the basis against which to assess global and country progress towards sustaining peace. National reports should be prepared for each conflict-affected country on progress towards those goals and targets. The reports, just as the predecessor national Millennium Development Goal reports, should provide an analysis of root causes

and of the challenges along the continuum of sustaining peace. Elements of proposed goal 16 and the implications of sustaining peace for all the sustainable development goals should also be addressed in national monitoring and reporting by all countries — both those affected by conflict and those that seek to support the building of peace.